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# THE WHITE PIGEON.



The boy pulled off the cover, and saw a white pigeon painted upon the sign. p. 22.



THE

PARENT'S ASSISTANT;

OR,

STORIES FOR CHILDREN,

IN TWO VOLUMES.

BY MARIA EDGEWORTH,

Author of Practical Education, and Letters for Literary Ladies.

VOLUME I.

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# PREFACE,

## ADDRESSED TO PARENTS.

All who have meditated on the art of governing mankind have been convinced that the fate of empires depends on the education of youth.

*Aristotle.*

A MOTTO from Aristotle may appear pedantic, but it was chosen merely to oppose such high authority to the following assertions of Dr. Johnson.

'Education,' says he, 'is as well known, and has long been as well known as ever it can be. Endeavouring to make children prematurely wise is useless labour. Suppose they have more knowledge at five or six years old than other children, what use can be made of it? It will be lost before it is wanted, and the waste of so much time and labour of the teacher is never to be repaid.\*' The remainder of this passage contains such an illiberal attack upon a celebrated female writer, as ought surely to have been suppressed by Dr. Johnson's biographer. When the Dr. attempted to ridicule this lady for keeping an infant boarding-school, and for condescending to write elementary books for children, he forgot his own eulogium upon Dr. Watts, of whom he speaks thus :

'For children he condescended to lay aside the philosopher, the scholar, and the wit, to write little poems of devotion, and systems of instruction adapted to their wants and capacities, from the dawn of reason, to its gradation of advance in the morning of life. Every man acquainted with the common principles of human action, will look with veneration on the writer, who is at one time combating

\* Boswell's Life of Johnson.

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Locke, and at another time making a catechism for *children in their fourth year*. A voluntary descent from the dignity of science is perhaps the hardest lesson which humility can teach.\*

It seems, however, a very easy task to write for children. Those only, who have been interested in the education of a family, who have patiently followed children through the first processes of reasoning, who have daily watched over their thoughts and feelings; those only, who know with what ease and rapidity the early associations of ideas are formed, on which the future taste, character and happiness depend, can feel the dangers and difficulties of such an undertaking.

For a length of time education was classed amongst the subjects of vague and metaphysical speculation; but, of late, it has attained its proper station in experimental philosophy.—The sober sense of Locke, and the enthusiastic eloquence of Rousseau, have directed to this object the attention of philosophers and men of genius. Many theories have been invented, several just observations have been made, and some few facts have been established.

Dr. Reid remarks, that ‘if we could obtain a distinct and full history of all that hath passed in the mind of a child, from the beginning of life and sensation, till it grows up to the use of reason; how its infant faculties began to work, and how they brought forth and ripened all the various notions, opinions and sentiments, which we find in ourselves when we come to be capable of reflection, this would be a treasure of natural history, which would probably give more light into the human faculties, than all the systems of philosophers about them, since the beginning of the world.’\*

\* Dr. Reid on the Intellectual Powers of Man.

Indeed in all sciences the grand difficulty has been to ascertain facts—a difficulty, which in the science of education peculiar circumstances conspire to increase. Here the objects of every experiment are so interesting, that we cannot hold our minds indifferent to the result. Nor is it to be expected, that many registers of experiments, successful and unsuccessful, should be kept, much less should be published, when we consider, that the combined powers of affection and vanity, of partiality to his child, and to his theory will act upon the minds of a parent, in opposition to the abstract love of justice, and the general desire to increase the wisdom and happiness of mankind.

Notwithstanding these difficulties, an attempt to keep such a register has actually been made ; it was begun in the year 1776, long before Doctor Reid's book was published. The design has from time to time been pursued to this present year ; and though much has not been collected, every circumstance and conversation that has been preserved is faithfully and accurately related.

These notes have been of great advantage to the writer of the following Stories ; and will probably at some future time, be laid before the public, as a collection of experiments upon a subject which has been hitherto treated theoretically.

The following tales have been divided into two parts, as they were designed for different classes of children. The question, whether society could subsist without the distinction of ranks, is a question involving a variety of complicated discussions which we leave to the politician and the legislator. At present it is necessary that the education of different ranks should, in some respects, be different :

they have few ideas, few habits in common ; their peculiar vices and virtues do not arise from the same causes, and their ambition is to be directed to different objects. But justice, truth and humanity, are confined to no particular rank, and should be enforced with equal care and energy upon the minds of young people of every station ; and it is hoped that these principles have never been forgotten in the following pages.

As the ideas of children multiply, the language of their books should become less simple ; else their taste will quickly be disgusted, or will remain stationary. Children, that live with people, who converse with elegance, will not be contented with a style inferior to what they hear from every body near them.

It may be remarked, that almost all language is metaphoric—from the conversation of the maid in the nursery, who lulls a cross infant to sleep, to that of the lady in the drawing-room, who, with silly civility, takes a child upon her lap to entertain it by a repetition of fashionable phrases. *Slang* (the term is disgracefully naturalized in our vocabulary) contains as much and as abstract metaphor as can be found in the most refined literary language. Nor have we reason to suppose, that one kind of metaphor is more difficult than another to be understood by children ; they frequently hear the most complicated metaphorical expressions in conversation, such as allude to our fashions and the prejudices of society, with which they are utterly unacquainted.

All poetical allusions have, however, been avoided in this book—only such situations are described as children can easily imagine and which may con-

requently interest their feelings.—Such examples of virtue are painted, as are not above their conception of excellence, and their powers of sympathy and emulation.

It is not easy to give *rewards* to children, which shall not indirectly do them harm, by fostering some hurtful taste or passion : In the story of Lazy Lawrence, where the object was to excite a spirit of industry, care has been taken to proportion the reward to the exertion, and to point out that people feel cheerful and happy, whilst they are employed. The reward of our industrious boy, though it be money, is only money, considered as the means of gratifying a benevolent wish. In a commercial nation, it is especially necessary to separate, as much as possible, the spirit of industry and avarice ; and to beware lest we introduce Vice under the form of Virtue.

In the story of Tarlton and Loveit, are represented the danger and the folly of that weakness of mind, and easiness to be led, which too often pass for good nature ; and, in the story of the False Key, are pointed out some of the evils to which a well-educated boy, when he first goes to service, is exposed from the profligacy of his fellow-servants.

In the Birth-day Present, in the History of Mademoiselle Panache, and in the character of Mrs. Theresa Tattle, the Parent's Assistant has pointed out the dangers, which may arise in education from a bad servant, a silly governess, and a common acquaintance.

In the Barring-out, the errors, to which a high spirit and the love of party are apt to lead, have been made the subject of correction ; and it is

hoped that the common fault of making the most *active* and the most ingenious, has been as much as possible avoided. *Unsuccessful* cunning will not be admired, and cannot induce imitation.

It has likewise been attempted in these Stories to provide antidotes against ill-humour, the epidemic rage for dissipation, and the fatal propensity to admire and imitate whatever the fashion of the moment may distinguish. Were young people, either in public schools or in private families, absolutely free from bad examples, it would not be advisable to introduce despicable and vicious characters in books intended for their improvement. But in real life they *must* see vice, and it is best that they should be early shocked with the representation of what they are to avoid. There is a great deal of difference between innocence and ignorance.

To prevent precepts of morality from tiring the ear and the mind, it was necessary to make the stories, in which they are introduced in some measure dramatic; to keep alive hope, and fear, and curiosity, by some degree of intricacy. At the same time care has been taken to avoid inflaming the imagination, or exciting a restless spirit of adventure, by exhibiting false views of life, and creating hopes, which in the ordinary course of things, cannot be realized.

Dr. Johnson—to recur to him, not from a spirit of contradiction, but from a fear that his authority should establish errors—Dr. Johnson says, that ‘Babies do not like to hear stories of babies like themselves; that they require to have their imaginations raised by tales of giants and fairies, and castles and enchantments,’—The fact remains to be proved: but supposing that they do prefer such



tales, is this a reason why they should be indulged in reading them? It may be said that a little experience in life would soon convince them, that fairies, giants, and enchanters, are not to be met with in the world. But why should the mind be filled with fantastic visions, instead of useful knowledge? Why should so much valuable time be lost? Why should we vitiate their taste, and spoil their appetite, by suffering them to feed upon sweetmeats? It is to be hoped, that the magic of Dr. Johnson's name will not have power to restore the reign of fairies.

But even when the improbability of fairy tales is avoided, care should be taken to keep objects in their just proportions, when we attempt an imitation of real life.

‘Love, hatred, fear, and anger, are to be raised in the soul,’ says an eminent poet, ‘by shewing their objects out of their true proportion, either greater than the life or less; but instruction is to be given, by shewing them what they really are.’

And surely a writer, who sincerely wishes to increase the happiness of mankind, will find it easy to give up the fame, that might be acquired by eloquence, when it is injurious to the cause of truth.

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The Stories entitled, *the Little Dog Trusty, the Orange Man and the Thief, and the Purple Jar*, which were given in the former edition, are transferred to a work for younger children, entitled  
EARLY LESSONS.



## THE WHITE PIGEON.

THE little town of Somerville, in Ireland, has, within these few years, assumed the neat and cheerful appearance of an English village. Mr. Somerville, to whom this town belongs, wished to inspire his tenantry with a taste for order, and domestic happiness, and took every means in his power, to encourage industrious well-behaved people to settle in his neighbourhood. When he had finished building a row of good slated houses in his town, he declared, he would set them to the best tenants that he could find, and proposals were quickly sent to him from all parts of the country. By the best tenants, Mr. Somerville did not, however, mean the best bidders, and many, who had offered an extravagant price for the houses, were surprised to find their proposals rejected. Amongst these was Mr. Cox, an ale-house keeper, who did not bear a very good character.

‘Please your honour, Sir,’ said he, to Mr. Somerville, ‘I expected, since I bid as fair and fairer for it than any other, that you would have set me the house next the apothecary’s. Was not it fifteen guineas I mentioned in my proposal?’ and did not your honour give it against me for thirteen?’

‘My honour did just so,’ replied Mr. Somerville calmly.

‘And please your honour, but I don’t know what it is I or mine have done to offend you—I’m sure there is not a gentleman in all Ireland I’d go father to sarve. Would not I go to Cork to-morrow for the least word from your honour?’

‘I am much obliged to you, Mr. Cox, but I have no business at Cork at present,’ answered Mr. Somerville drily.

‘It is all I wish,’ exclaimed Mr. Cox, ‘that I could find out and light upon the man, that has belied me to your honour.’

‘No man has belied you, Mr. Cox; but your nose belies you much, if you do not love drinking a little; and your black eye and cut chin belie you much, if you do not love quarrelling a little.’

‘ Quarrel! I quarrel, please your honour! I defy any man, or set of men, ten mile round, to prove such a thing; and I am ready to fight him that dares to say the like of me; I’d fight him here in your honour’s presence, if he’d only come out this minute, and meet me like a man.’

Here Mr. Cox put himself into a boxing attitude, but observing that Mr. Somerville looked at his threatening gesture with a smile, and that several people, who had gathered round him as he stood in the street, laughed at the proof he gave of his peaceable disposition, he changed his attitude, and went on to vindicate himself against the charge of drinking.

‘ And as to drink, please your honour, there’s no truth in it. Not a drop of whiskey, good or bad, have I touched these six months, except what I took with Jemmy M’Doole the night I had the misfortune to meet your honour coming home from the fair of Ballynagrish.

To this speech Mr. Somerville made no answer, but turned away to look at the bow window of a handsome new inn, which the glazier was at this instant glazing.

‘ Please your honour, that new inn is not set, I hear, as yet,’ resumed Mr. Cox; ‘ If your honour recollects, you promised to make me a compliment of it, last Seraph-tide was twelve-month.’

‘ Impossible!’ cried Mr. Somerville, ‘ for I had no thoughts of building an inn at that time.’

‘ O, I beg your honour’s pardon; but if you’d be just pleased to recollect, it was coming through the gap in the bog-meadows, *forenent*, Thady O’Connor, you made me the promise—I’ll leave it to him, so I will.’

‘ But I will not leave it to him, I assure you,’ cried Mr. Somerville; ‘ I never made any such promise: I never thought of setting this inn to you.’

‘ Then your honour won’t let me have it?’

‘ No. You have told me a dozen falsehoods. I do not wish to have you for a tenant.’

‘ Well, God bless your honour; I’ve no more to say, but God bless your honour,’ said Mr. Cox; and he walked away muttering to himself, as he slouched his hat over his face—‘ I hope I’ll live to be revenged on him?’

Mr. Somerville, the next morning, went with his family to look at the new inn, which he expected to see

perfectly finished; but he was met by the carpenter, who, with a rueful face, informed him, that six panes of glass in the large bow window had been broken during the night.

‘Ha; perhaps Mr. Cox has broken my windows, in revenge for my refusing to let him my house,’ said Mr. Somerville; and many of the neighbours, who knew the malicious character of this Mr. Cox, observed that this was like one of his tricks.

A boy of about twelve years old, however, stepped forward and said, ‘I don’t like Mr. Cox, I’m sure; for once he beat me, when he was drunk; but, for all that, no one should be accused wrongfully: he *could* not be the person that broke these windows last night; for he was six miles off; he slept at his cousin’s last night, and he has not returned home yet; so I think he knows nothing of the matter.’

Mr. Somerville was pleased with the honest simplicity of this boy, and observing that he looked in eagerly at the staircase when the house-door was opened, he asked him whether he should like to go in, and see the new house.

‘Yes Sir,’ said the boy, ‘I should like to go up those stairs, and to see what I should come to.’

‘Up with you then!’ said Mr. Somerville; and the boy ran up the stairs—He went from room to room with great expressions of admiration and delight; at length as he was examining one of the garrets, he was startled by a fluttering noise over his head; and looking up, he saw a white pigeon, who, frightened at his appearance, began to fly round and round the room, till it found its way out of the door, and it flew into the staircase. The carpenter was speaking to Mr. Somerville upon the landing-place of the stairs; but the moment he spied the white pigeon, he broke off in the midst of his speech about *the* nose of the stairs, and exclaimed, ‘There he is, please your honour!—That’s he that has done all the damage to our bow-window—that’s the very same wicked white pigeon, that broke the church windows last Sunday was se’night; but he’s down for it now; we have him safe, and I’ll chop his head off, as he deserves, this minute.’

‘Stay! O stay! don’t chop his head off: he does not

deserve it,' cried the boy, who came running out of the garret with the greatest eagerness—'I broke your window, Sir,' said he to Mr. Somerville—'I broke your window with this ball; but I did not know that I had done it, till this moment, I assure you, or I should have told you before. Don't chop his head off,' added the boy to the carpenter, who had now the white pigeon in his hands.

'No,' said Mr. Somerville, 'the pigeon's head shall not be chopped off, nor you'rs neither my good boy for breaking a window. I am persuaded, by your open honest countenance, that you are speaking the truth; but pray explain this matter to us; for you have not made it quite clear;---How happened it that you could break my windows without knowing it? and how came you to find it out at last?'

'Sir,' said the boy, 'if you'll come up here, I'll show you all I know, and how I came to know it.'

Mr. Somerville followed him into the garret; and the boy pointed to a pane of glass, that was broken in a small window that looked out upon a piece of waste ground behind the house. Upon this piece of waste ground the children of the village often used to play. 'We were playing there at ball yesterday evening,' continued the boy, addressing himself to Mr. Somerville, 'and one of the lads challenged me to hit a mark in the wall, which I did; but he said I did not hit it, and bade me give him up my ball as the forfeit. This I would not do; and when he began to wrestle with me for it, I threw the ball as I thought, over the house. He ran to look for it in the street, but could not find it, which I was very glad of; but I was very sorry just now, to find it myself, lying upon this heap of shavings, Sir, under this broken window; for, as soon as I saw it lying there, I knew I must have been the person that broke the window; and through this window came the white pigeon—Here's one of his white feathers sticking in the gap.'

'Yes,' said the carpenter, 'and in the bow-window-room below there's plenty of his feathers to be seen; for I've just been down to look: it was the pigeon broke *them* windows, sure enough.'

'But he could not have got in if I had not broke this little window,' said the boy eagerly; and I am able to

earn sixpence a day, and I'll pay for all the mischief and welcome. The white pigeon belongs to a poor neighbour, a friend of our's who is very fond of him; and I would not have him killed for twice as much money.'

'Take the pigeon, my honest, generous lad,' said Mr. Somerville, 'and carry him back to your neighbour. I forgive him all the mischief he has done me, tell your friend, for your sake. As to the rest, we can have the windows mended; and do you keep all the sixpences you earn for yourself.'

'That's what he never did yet,' said the carpenter; 'many's the sixpence he earns: but not a half-penny goes into his own pocket: it goes every farthing to his poor father and mother. Happy for them to have such a son!'

'More happy for him to have such a father and mother,' exclaimed the boy; 'their good days, they took all the best care of me, that was to be had for love or money, and would, if I would let them, go on paying for my schooling now, falling as they be in the world; but I must learn to mind the shop now. Good morning to you, Sir; and thank you kindly,' said he to Mr. Somerville.

'And where does this boy live, and who are his father and mother? they cannot live in town,' said Mr. Somerville, 'or I should have heard of them.'

'They are but just come into the town, please your honour,' said the carpenter; 'they lived formerly upon Counsellor O'Donnell's estate; but they were ruined, please your honour, by taking a joint lease with a man, who fell afterwards into bad company, run out all he had, so could not pay the landlord; and these poor people were forced to pay his share and their own too, which almost ruined them: they were obliged to give up the land; and now they have furnished a little shop in this town, with what goods they could afford to buy with the money they got by the sale of their cattle and stock. They have the good-will of all who know them; and I am sure I hope they will do well. The boy is very ready in the shop, though he said only that he could earn sixpence a day; he writes a good hand, and is quick in casting up accounts, for his age. Besides he is likely to do well in the world, because he is never in idle compa-

ny; and I've known him since he was two foot high, and never heard of his telling a lie.'

'This is an excellent character of the boy indeed,' said Mr. Somerville; 'and from his behaviour this morning, I am inclined to think that he deserved all you praises.' Mr. Somerville resolved to inquire more fully concerning this poor family, and to attend to their conduct himself, fully determined to assist them, if he should find them such as they had been represented.

In the mean time, this boy, whose name was Brian O'Neill, went to return the white pigeon to its owner.

'You have saved its life,' said the woman to whom it belonged, 'and I'll make you a present of it.'

Brian thanked her; and he from that day began to grow fond of the pigeon. He always took care to scatter some oats for it in his father's yard; and the pigeon grew so tame at last that it would hop about the kitchen, and eat off the same trencher with the dog.\*

Brian, after the shop was shut up at night, used to amuse himself with reading some little books which the schoolmaster, who formerly taught him arithmetic, was so good as to lend him. Amongst these he one evening met with a little book full of the history of birds and beasts; he looked immediately to see whether the pigeon was mentioned amongst the birds; and, to his great joy, he found a full description and history of his favourite bird.

'So, Brian, I see your schooling has not been thrown away upon you; you like your book, I see, when you have no master over you to bid you read,' said his father, when he came in and saw Brian reading this book very attentively.

'Thank you for having me taught to read, father,' said Brian; 'here I've made a great discovery: I've found out in this book, little as it looks, father, a most curious way of making a fortune; and I hope it will make your fortune, father: and if you'll sit down I'll tell it to you.'

Mr. O'Neill, in hopes of pleasing his son, rather than in the expectation of having his fortune made, immedi-

\* This is a fact.



ately sat down to listen; and his son explained to him, that he had found in his book an account of pigeons, who carried notes and letters; 'and, father,' continued Brian, 'I find my pigeon is of this sort; and I intend to make my pigeon carry messages: why should not he, Sir? If other pigeons have done so before him, I think he is as good, and I dare say will be as easy to teach, as any pigeon in the world: and I shall begin to teach him tomorrow morning; and then, father, you know people often pay a great deal for sending messengers; and no boy can run, no horse can gallop, so fast as a bird can fly; therefore a bird must be the best messenger, and I should be paid the best price—Hey, father?'

'To be sure, to be sure, my dear,' said his father, laughing; 'I wish you may make the best messenger in Ireland of your pigeon; but all I beg, my dear boy, is that you won't neglect our shop for your pigeon; for I've a notion, we have a better chance of making a fortune by the shop, than by the white pigeon.'

Brian never neglected the shop; but at his leisure hours he amused himself with training his pigeon; and, after much patience, he at last succeeded so well, that one day he went to his father, and offered to send him word by his pigeon, what beef was a pound in the market of Ballynagrish, where he was going.—'The pigeon will be home long before me, father; and he will come in at the kitchen window, and light upon the dresser; then you must untie the little note, which I shall have tied under his left wing, and you'll know the price of beef directly.'

The pigeon carried his message well; and Brian was much delighted with his success. He soon was employed by the neighbour's, who were amused by Brian's fondness of his swift messenger; and soon the fame of the white pigeon was spread amongst all, who frequented the markets and fairs of Somerville.

At one of these fairs, a set of men of desperate fortunes met to drink, and to concert plans of robberies. Their place of meeting was at the ale-house of Mr. Cox, the man who, as our readers may remember, was offended by Mr. Somerville's hinting, that he was fond of

drinking and of quarrelling, and who threatened vengeance of having been refused the new inn.

Whilst these men were talking over their schemes, one of them observed, that one of their companions was not arrived; another said no; he's six miles off, said another; and a third wished that he could make him hear at that distance. This turned the discourse upon the difficulties of sending messages secretly and quickly. Cox's son, a lad of about nineteen, who was one of this gang, mentioned the white carrier pigeon, and he was desired to try all means to get it into his possession. Accordingly, the next day young Cox went to Brian O'Neill, and tried at first by persuasion, and afterwards by threats, to prevail upon him to give up the pigeon. Brian was resolute in his refusal, more especially when the petitioner began to bully him.

'If we can't have it by fair means, we will by foul,' said Cox; and a few days afterwards the pigeon was gone. Brian searched for it in vain—inquired from all the neighbours if they had seen it, and applied, but to no purpose, to Cox. He swore that he knew nothing about the matter—but this was false—for it was he, who during the night time had stolen the white pigeon; he conveyed it to his employers, and they rejoiced, that they had gotten it into their possession, as they thought it would serve them for a useful messenger.

Nothing can be more short-sighted than cunning. The very means, which these people took to secure secrecy, were the means of bringing their plots to light. They endeavoured to teach the pigeon which they had stolen, to carry messages for them in a part of the country at some distance from Somerville; and when they fancied, that it had forgotten its former habits, and its old master, they thought, that they might venture to employ him nearer home. However, the pigeon had a better memory, than they imagined. They loosed him from a bag near the town of Ballynagrish, in hopes that he would stop at the house of Cox's cousin, which was on the road between Ballynagrish and Somerville. But the pigeon, though he had been purposely fed at this house for a week before this trial, did not stop there, but flew on to his old master's house in Somerville, and pecked at

the kitchen window, as he had formerly been taught to do. His master, fortunately, was within hearing, and poor Brian ran with the greatest joy to open the window, and to let him in.

‘O father, here’s my white pigeon come back of his own accord,’ exclaimed Brian; ‘I must run and show him to my mother.’

At this instant the pigeon spread his wings, and Brian discovered under one of its wings a small and very dirty looking billet; he opened it in his father’s presence: the scrawl was scarcely legible, but these words were at length decyphered.

‘Thare are eight of uz sworn; I send yo at botom thare names. We meat at tin this nite at my faders, and have harms and all in radiness to brake into the grate ouse. Mr. Summervill is to lye out to nite—kip the pigeon untill to-morrow.

For ever yours,

MURTAGH COX, JUN.’

Scarcely had they finished reading this note, than both father and son exclaimed, ‘Let us go and show it to Mr. Somerville.’ Before they set out, they had however the prudence to secure the pigeon, so that he should not be seen by any one but themselves.

Mr. Somerville, in consequence of this fortunate discovery, took proper measures for the apprehension of the eight men, who had sworn to rob his house; and when they were all safely lodged in the county gaol, he sent for Brian O’Neill and his father; and after thanking them for the service they had done him, he counted out ten bright guineas upon a table, and pushed them towards Brian, saying, ‘I suppose you know, that a reward of ten guineas was offered some weeks ago for the discovery of John Mac Dermod, one of the eight men, whom we have just taken up.’

‘No, Sir,’ said Brian; ‘I did not know it, and I did not bring that note to you to get ten guineas; but because I thought it was right. I dont wan’t to be paid for doing right.’

‘That’s my own boy,’ said his father.

‘ We thank you Sir, but we’ll not take the money ; *I do’nt like to take the price of blood.*’\*

‘ I know the difference, my good friends,’ said Mr. Somerville, ‘ between vile informers, and courageous, honest men.’

‘ Why, as to that, please your honour, though we are poor, I hope we are honest.’

‘ And what is more,’ said Mr. Somerville, ‘ I have a notion that you would continue to be honest, even if you were rich.’

‘ Will you, my good lad,’ continued Mr. Somerville, after a moment’s pause, ‘ will you trust me with your white pigeon a few days ?’

‘ O, and welcome, Sir,’ said the boy with a smile ; and he brought the pigeon to Mr. Somerville when it was dark, and nobody saw him. A few days afterwards Mr. Somerville called at O’Neill’s house, and bid him and his son follow him. They followed till he stopped opposite to the bow window of the new inn. The carpenter had just put up a sign, which was covered over with a bit of carpeting.

‘ Go up the ladder, will you,’ said Mr. Somerville to Brian, ‘ and pull that sign straight, for it hangs quite crooked. There now it is straight. Now pull off the carpet, and let us see the new sign.’

The boy pulled off the cover, and saw a white pigeon painted upon the sign, and the name of O’Neill in large letters underneath.

‘ Take care you do not tumble down and break your neck upon this joyful occasion,’ said Mr. Somerville, who saw that Brian’s surprise was too great for his situation. ‘ Come down from the ladder, and wish your father joy of being master of the new inn called the White Pigeon. And I wish him joy of having such a son as you are. Those who bring up their children well will certainly be rewarded for it, be they poor or rich.’

\* This answer was really given upon a similar occasion.

## LAZY LAWRENCE.



**I**N the pleasant valley of Ashton there lived an elderly woman of the name of Preston; she had a small neat cottage, and there was not a weed to be seen in her garden. It was upon her garden that she chiefly depended for support; it consisted of strawberry beds, and one small border for flowers. The pinks and roses she tied up in nice nosegays, and sent either to Clifton or Bristol to be sold; as to her strawberries, she did not send them to market, because it was the custom for numbers of people to come from Clifton, in the summer time, to eat strawberries and cream at the gardens in Ashton.

Now the widow Preston was so obliging, active, and good humoured, that every one who came to see her was pleased. She lived happily in this manner for several years; but alas! one autumn she fell sick, and during her illness, every thing went wrong; her garden was neglected, her cow died, and all the money which she had saved was spent in paying for medicines. The win-

ter passed away while she was so weak that she could earn but little by her work ; and, when the summer came her rent was called for, and the rent was not ready in her little purse as usual. She begged a few months' delay, and they were granted to her ; but at the end of that time there was no resource but to sell her horse Lightfoot. Now Lightfoot, though perhaps he had seen his best days, was a very great favourite ; in his youth he had always carried the dame to market behind her husband ; and it was now her little son Jem's turn to ride him. It was Jem's business to feed Lightfoot, and to take care of him ; a charge which he never neglected, for besides being a very good-natured, he was a very industrious boy.

' It will go near to break my Jem's heart,' said dame Preston to herself, as she sat one evening beside the fire, stirring the embers, and considering how she had best open the matter to her son, who stood opposite to her, eating a dry crust of bread very heartily for supper.

' Jem,' said the old woman, ' what ar't hungry !'

' That I am, brave and hungry !'

' Aye ! no wonder ; you've been brave hard at work—Eh ?'

' Brave hard ! I wish it was not so dark, mother, that you might just step out and see the great bed I've dug ; I know you'd say it was not a bad day's work—and, oh mother ! I've good news ; farmer Truck will give us the giant-strawberries, and I'm to go for 'em to-morrow morning, and I'll be back afore breakfast.'

' God bless the boy ! how he talks ! Four mile there, and four mile back again, afore breakfast !'

' Aye, upon Lightfoot you know mother, very easily, mayn't I ?'

' Aye, child !'

' Why do you sigh, mother ?'

' Finish thy supper, child.'

' I've done,' cried Jem, swallowing the last mouthful hastily, as if he thought he had been too long at supper—' and now for the great needle ; I must see and mend Lightfoot's bridle afore I go to bed.' To work he set by the light of the fire, and the dame having once more stirred it, began again with ' Jem, dear, does he go lame at

all now?'—'What Lightfoot! Oh la, no, not he!—never was so well of his lameness in all his life—he's grown quite young again, I think, and then he's so fat he can hardly wag.'—'God bless him—that's right—we must see, Jem, and keep him fat.'

'For what, mother?'

'For Monday fortnight at the fair. He's to be——sold!'

'Lightfoot!' cried Jem, and let the bridle fall from his hand; 'and *will* mother sell Lightfoot!'

'*Will*; no: but I *must*, Jem.'

'Must! who says you *must*? why *must* you, mother?'

'I must, I say, child—Why must not I pay my debts honestly—and must not I pay my rent; and was not it called for long and long ago; and have not I had time; and did I not promise to pay it for certain Monday fortnight, and am not I two guineas short—and where am I to get two guineas? So what signifies talking, child,' said the widow, leaning her head upon her arm, 'Lightfoot must go.'

Jem was silent for a few minutes.—'Two guineas; that's a great, great deal.—If I worked, and worked ever so hard, I could no ways earn two guineas *afore* Monday fortnight—could I, mother?'

'Lord help thee, no; not an' work thyself to death.'

'But I could earn something, though, I say,' cried Jem proudly; 'and I *will* earn *something*—if it be ever so little, it will be *something*—and I shall do my very best; so I will.'

'That I'm sure of, my child,' said his mother, drawing him towards her, and kissing him; 'you were always a good industrious lad, *that* I will say afore your face or behind your back;—but it won't do now—Lightfoot *must* go.'

Jem turned away, struggling to hide his tears, and went to bed without saying a word more. But he knew that crying would do no good, so he presently wiped his eyes and lay awake, considering what he could possibly do to save the horse.—'If I get ever so little,' he still said to himself, 'it will be *something*; and who knows but landlord might then wait a bit longer? and we might make it all up in time; for a penny a day might come to two guineas in time.'

But how to get the first penny was the question.—Then he recollected, that one day, when he had been sent to Clifton to sell some flowers, he had seen an old woman with a board beside her covered with various sparkling stones, which people stopped to look at as they passed, and he remembered that some people bought the stones; one paid two-pence, another three-pence, and another six-pence for them; and Jem heard her say that she got them amongst the neighbouring rocks: so he thought that if he tried he might find some too, and sell them as she had done.

Early in the morning he wakened full of this scheme; jumped up, dressed himself, and, having given one look at poor Lightfoot in his stable, set off to Clifton in search of the old woman, to inquire where she found the sparkling stones. But it was too early in the morning, the old woman was not at her seat; so he turned back again disappointed.—He did not waste his time waiting for her, but saddled and bridled Lightfoot, and went to farmer Truck's for the giant-strawberries. A great part of the morning was spent in putting them into the ground; and, as soon as that was finished, he set out again in quest of the old woman, whom, to his great joy, he spied sitting at the corner of the street with her board before her. But this old woman was deaf and cross; and when at last Jem made her hear his questions, he could get no answer from her, but that she found the fossils where he would never find any more. 'But can't I look where you looked?'—'Look away, nobody hinders you,' replied the old woman; and these were the only words she would say.—Jem was not, however, a boy to be easily discouraged; he went to the rocks, and walked slowly along, looking at all the stones as he passed. Presently he came to a place where a number of men were at work loosening some large rocks, and one amongst the workmen was stooping down looking for something very eagerly; Jem ran up, and asked if he could help him. 'Yes,' said the man, 'you can; I've just dropped amongst this heap of rubbish, a fine piece of crystal that I got to day'—'What kind of a looking thing is it?' said Jem. 'White, and like glass,' said the man, and went on working, whilst Jem looked very carefully over



the heap of rubbish for a great while. 'Come,' said the man, 'it's gone for ever; don't trouble yourself any more, my boy.'—'It's no trouble; I'll look a little longer; we'll not give it up so soon,' said Jem; and, after he had looked a little longer, he found the piece of crystal. 'Thank'e,' said the man, 'you are a fine little industrious fellow.' Jem, encouraged by the tone of voice in which the man spoke this, ventured to ask him the same questions which he had asked the old woman. 'One good turn deserves another,' said the man; 'we are going to dinner just now, and shall leave off work—wait for me here, and I'll make it worth your while.'

Jem waited; and, as he was very attentively observing how the workmen went on with their work, he heard somebody near him give a great yawn, and, turning round, he saw stretched upon the grass, beside the river, a boy about his own age, who he knew very well, went in the village of Ashton by the name of Lazy Lawrence; a name which he most justly deserved, for he never did any thing from morning to night; he neither worked nor played, but sauntered or lounged about, restless and yawning. His father was an alehouse-keeper, and being generally drunk, could take no care of his son, so that Lazy Lawrence grew every day worse and worse. However, some of the neighbours said that he was a good-natured poor fellow enough, and would never do any one harm but himself; whilst others, who were wiser, often shook their heads, and told him, that idleness was the root of all evil.

'What, Lawrence!' cried Jem to him, when he saw him lying upon the grass—'what are you asleep?'—'Not quite.'—'Are you awake?'—'Not quite.'—'What are you doing there?'—'Nothing.'—'What are you thinking of?'—'Nothing.'—'What makes you lie there?'—'I don't know—because I can't find any body to play with me to-day—Will you come and play?'—'No, I can't; I'm busy.'—'Busy,' cried Lawrence, stretching himself, 'you are always busy—I would not be you for the world, to have so much to do always.'—'And I,' said Jem, laughing, 'would not be you for the world, to have nothing to do.' So they parted, for the workman just then called Jem to follow him. He took him home to

his own house, and shewed him a parcel of fossils which he had gathered he said, on purpose to sell, but had never had time yet to sort them. He set about it however now, and having picked out those which he judged to be the best, he put them into a small basket, and gave them to Jem to sell, upon condition that he should bring him half of what he got. Jem, pleased to be employed, was ready to agree to what the man proposed, provided his mother had no objection to it. When he went home to dinner, he told his mother his scheme, and she smiled and said he might do as he pleased, for she was not afraid of his being from home. 'You are not an idle boy,' said she, 'so there is little danger of your getting into any mischief.'

Accordingly Jem that evening took his stand, with his little basket, upon the bank of the river, just at the place where people land from a ferry-boat, and where the walk turns to the wells, where numbers of people perpetually pass to drink the waters. He chose his place well, and waited almost all the evening, offering his fossils with great assiduity to every passenger; but not one person bought any. 'Holla!' cried some sailors, who had just rowed a boat to land, 'bear a hand here, will you, my little fellow! and carry these parcels for us into yonder house.' Jem ran down immediately for the parcels, and did what he was asked to do so quickly, and with so much good will, that the master of the boat took notice of him, and, when he was going away, stopped to ask him what he had got in his little basket; and when he saw that they were fossils, he immediately told Jem to follow him, for that he was going to carry some shells he had brought from abroad to a lady in the neighbourhood who was making a grotto. 'She will likely buy your stones into the bargain; come along, my lad, we can but try.'

The lady lived but a very little way off, so that they were soon at her house. She was alone in her parlour, and was sorting a bundle of feathers of different colours; they lay on a sheet of pasteboard upon a window-seat, and it happened that as the sailor was bustling round the table to shew off his shells, he knocked down the sheet of pasteboard, and scattered all the feathers.

The lady looked very sorry, which Jem observing, he took the opportunity, whilst she was busy looking over the sailor's bag of shells, to gather together all the feathers, and sort them according to their different colours, as he had seen them sorted when he first came into the room.

'Where is the little boy you brought with you? I thought I saw him here just now.'—'And here I am, ma'am,' cried Jem, creeping from under the table, with some few remaining feathers which he had picked from the carpet; 'I thought,' added he, pointing to the others, 'I had better be doing something than standing idle, ma'am.' She smiled, and pleased with his activity and simplicity, began to ask him several questions; such as, who he was, where he lived, what employment he had, and how much a day he earned by gathering fossils. 'This is the first day I ever tried,' said Jem; 'I never sold any yet, and, if you don't buy 'em now ma'am, I'm afraid nobody else will, for I've asked every body else.'—'Come then,' said the lady, laughing, 'if that is the case I think had better buy them all.' So emptying all the fossils out of his basket she put a half a crown into it. Jem's eyes sparkled with joy. 'Oh, thank you, ma'am,' said he, 'I will be sure and bring you as many more to-morrow.'—'Yes, but I don't promise you,' said she, 'to give you half a crown to-morrow.'—'But, perhaps, though you don't promise it, you will.'—'No,' said the lady, 'do not deceive yourself; I assure you that I will not. *That*, instead of encouraging you to be industrious, would teach you to be idle.' Jem did not quite understand what she meant by this, but answered, 'I'm sure I don't wish to be idle; what I want is to earn something every day, if I knew how; I'm sure I don't wish to be idle. If you knew all you'd know I did not.'—'How do you mean, *if I knew all?*'—'Why I mean, if you knew about Lightfoot.'—'Who's Lightfoot?'—'Why, mammy's horse,' added Jem, looking out of the window; 'I must make haste home and feed him, afore it get dark; he'll wonder what's gone with me.'—'Let him wonder a few minutes longer,' said the lady, 'and tell me the rest of your story.'—'I've no story ma'am, to tell, but as how mammy says he must go to the fair Monday

fortnight to be sold, if she can't get the two guineas for her rent; and I should be main sorry to part with him, for I love him, and he loves me; so I'll work for him, I will, all I can; to be sure, as mammy says, I have no chance, such a little fellow as I am, of earning two guineas afore Monday fortnight.'—'But are you in earnest willing to work,' said the lady; 'you know there is a great deal of difference between picking up a few stones, and working steadily every day, and all day long.'—'But,' said Jem, 'I would work every day, and all day long.' 'Then,' said the lady, 'I will give you work. Come here to-morrow morning, and my gardener will set you to weed the shrubberies, and I will pay you six-pence a day. Remember you must be at the gates by six o'clock.' Jem bowed, thanked her, and went away. It was late in the evening, and he was impatient to get home to feed Lightfoot; yet he recollected that he had promised the man who had trusted him to sell the fossils that he would bring him half of what he got for them; so he thought that he had better go to him directly; and away he went, running along by the water side about a quarter of a mile, till he came to the man's house. He was just come home from work, and was surprised when Jem showed him the half-crown, saying, 'Look what I got for the stones; you are to have half, you know.'—'No,' said the man, when he had heard his story, 'I shall not take the half of that; it was given to you. I expected but a shilling at the most, and the half of that is but six-pence, and that I'll take.—Wife! give the lad two shillings, and take this half-crown.' So wife opened an old glove, and took out two shillings; and the man, as she opened the glove, put in his fingers, and took out a little silver penny.—'There, he shall have that into the bargain for his honesty—Honesty is the best policy—There's a lucky penny for you, that I've kept ever since I can remember.' 'Don't you ever go to part with it, do you hear!' cried the woman. 'Let him do what he will with it, wife, said the man.' 'But,' argued the wife, 'another penny would do just as well to buy gingerbread, and that's what it will go for.'—'No, that it shall not, I promise you,' said Jem; and so he ran away home, fed Lightfoot, stroked him, went to bed, jumped

up at five o'clock in the morning, and went singing to work as gay as a lark.

Four days he worked 'every day and all day long;' and the lady every evening, when she came out to walk in her gardens, looked at his work. At last she said to her gardener, 'This little boy works very hard.'—'Never had so good a little boy about the grounds,' said the gardener; 'he's always at his work let me come by when I will, and he has got twice as much done as another would do; yes, twice as much, ma'am; for look here—he began at this here rose bush, and now he's got to where you stand, ma'am; and here is the day's work that t'other boy, and he's three years older too, did to-day—I say, measure Jem's fairly, and its twice as much, I'm sure.'—'Well,' said the lady to her gardener, 'show me how much is a fair good day's work for a boy of his age.—Come at six o'clock, and go at six?' 'why, about this much, ma'am,' said the gardener, marking off a piece of the border with his spade. 'Then, little boy,' said the lady, 'so much shall be your task every day; the gardener will mark it off for you: and when you've done, the rest of the day you may do what you please.' Jem was extremely glad of this; and the next day he had finished his task by four o'clock, so that he had all the rest of the evening to himself. Jem was as fond of play as any little boy could be, and when he was at it, played with all the eagerness and gayety imaginable: so as soon as he had finished his task, fed Light-foot, and put by the six-pence he had earned that day, he ran to the play ground in the village, where he found a party of boys playing, and amongst them Lazy Lawrence, who indeed was not playing, but lounging upon a gate with his thumb in his mouth. The rest were playing at cricket. Jem joined them, and was the merriest and most active amongst them; till, at last, when quite out of breath with running, he was obliged to give up to rest himself, and sat down upon the stile, close to the gate on which Lazy Lawrence was swinging. 'And why don't you play, Lawrence?' said he.—'I am tired,' said Lawrence.—'Tired of what?'—'I don't know well what tires me; grandmother says I'm ill, and I must take something—I don't know what ails me.'—'Oh, pugh! take a good race, one, two, three, and away, and you'll

find yourself as well as ever. Come run—one, two, three, and away.’—‘ Ah, no, I can’t run indeed,’ said he, hanging back heavily ; ‘ you know I can play all day long if I like it, so I don’t mind play as you do, who have only one hour for it.’ ‘ So much the worse for you. Come now, I’m quite fresh again, will you have one game at ball ; do.’—‘ No, I tell you I can’t ; I am as tired as if I had been working all day long as hard as a horse.’—‘ Ten times more,’ said Jem, ‘ for I have been working all day long as hard as a horse, and yet you see I’m not a bit tired ; only a little out of breath just now.’—‘ That’s very odd,’ said Lawrence, and yawned, for want of some better answer ; then taking out a handful of half-pence—‘ See what I got from father to-day, because I asked him just at the right time, when he had drunk a glass or two ; then I can get any thing I want out of him—see ! a penny, two-pence, three-pence, four-pence—there’s eight-pence in all ; would not you be happy if you had *eight-pence* ?’—‘ Why, I don’t know,’ said Jem laughing, ‘ you don’t seem happy, and you *have eight-pence* ’—‘ That does not signify, though I’m sure you only say that because you envy me—you don’t know what it is to have eight-pence—you never had more than two-pence or three-pence at a time in all your life.’ Jem smiled. ‘ Oh, as to that,’ said he, ‘ you are mistaken, for I have at this very time more than than two-pence, three-pence, or eight-pence either ; I have—let me see—stones, two shillings ; then five days’ work, that’s five six-pences, that’s two shillings and six-pence, in all makes four shillings and six pence, and my silver penny, is four and seven-pence. Four and seven-pence !’—‘ You have not !’ said Lawrence, roused so as absolutely to stand upright, ‘ four and seven-pence ! have you ? Show it me, and then I’ll believe you.’—‘ Follow me then,’ cried Jem, ‘ and I’ll soon make you believe me ; come.’—‘ Is it far ?’ said Lawrence, following half running, half hobbling, till he came to the stable, where Jem shewed him his treasure. ‘ And how did you come by it ? honestly ?’ ‘ Honestly ! to be sure I did ; I earned it all.’—‘ Lord bless me, earned it ! well I’ve a great mind to work ; but then its such hot weather ; besides, grandmother says I’m not strong enough yet for hard work ; and besides, I know how to

coax daddy out of money when I want it, so I need not work—But four and seven-pence; let's see, what will you do with it all?'—'That's a secret,' said Jem, looking great. 'I can guess; I know what I'd do with it if it was mine—First, I'd buy my pockets full of gingerbread; then I'd buy ever so many apples and nuts; don't you love nuts? I'd buy nuts enough to last me from this time to Christmas, and I'd make little Newton crack 'em for me, for that's the worst of nuts, there's the trouble of cracking 'em.'—'Well, you never deserve to have a nut.'—'But you'll give me some of your's,' said Lawrence in a fawning tone, for he thought it easier to coax than to work—'you'll give me some of your good things, won't you?'—'I shall not have any of those good things,' said Jem. 'Then what will you do with all your money?'—'Oh, I know very well what to do with it; but, as I told you, that's a secret, and I shan't tell it any body—Come now, let's go back and play—their game's up, I dare say.'—Lawrence went back with him full of curiosity, and out of humour with himself and his eight-pence.—'If I had four and seven-pence,' said he to himself, 'I certainly should be happy!'

The next day, as usual, Jem jumped up before six o'clock and went to his work, whilst Lazy Lawrence sauntered about without knowing what to do with himself. In the course of two days he laid out six-pence of his money in apples and gingerbread, and as long as these lasted he found himself well received by his companions; but at length the third day he spent his last half-penny, and when it was gone, unfortunately some nuts tempted him very much, but he had no money to pay for them; so he ran home to coax his father as he called it. When he got home, he heard his father talking very loud, and at first he thought he was drunk; but when he opened the kitchen door, he saw that he was not drunk, but angry.

'You lazy dog!' cried he, turning suddenly upon Lawrence, and gave him such a violent box on the ear as made the light flash from his eyes; 'you lazy dog! see what you've done for me—look!—look, look, I say!' Lawrence looked as soon as he came to the use of his senses, and, with fear, amazement, and remorse, beheld at least a

dozen bottles burst, and the fine Worcestershire cider streaming over the floor. 'Now, did not I order you three days ago to carry these bottles to the cellar; and did not I charge you to wire the corks? answer me, you lazy rascal; did not I?'—'Yes,' said Lawrence, scratching his head. 'And why was it not done? I ask you,' cried his father with renewed anger, as another bottle burst at the moment. 'What do you stand there for, you lazy brat; why dont you move? I say—No no,' catching hold of him, 'I believe you can't move; but I'll make you.' And he shook him, till Lawrence was so giddy he could not stand. 'What had you to think of? what had you to do all day long, that you could not carry my cider, my Worcestershire cider to the cellar when I bid you? But go, you'll never be good for any thing, you are such a lazy rascal—get out of my sight!' So saying he pushed him out of the house door, and Lawrence sneaked off, seeing that this was no time to make his petition for half-pence.

The next day he saw the nuts again, and, wishing for them more than ever, went home in hopes that his father, as he said to himself, would be in a better humour. But the cider was still fresh in his recollection, and the moment Lawrence began to whisper the word, 'half-penny' in his ear, his father swore, with a loud oath, 'I will not give you a half-penny, no, not a farthing, for a month to come; if you want money, go work for it; I've had enough of your laziness—Go work!' At these terrible words Lawrence burst into tears, and, going to the side of a ditch, sat down and cried for an hour; and when he had cried till he could cry no more, he exerted himself so far as to empty his pockets, to see whether there might not happen to be one half-penny left; and to his great joy, in the farthest corner of his pocket one half-penny was found. With this he proceeded to the fruit woman's stall. She was busy weighing out some plums, so he was obliged to wait; and, whilst he was waiting, he heard some people near him talking and laughing very loud. The fruit woman's stall was at the gate of an inn-yard; and peeping through the gate in this yard, Lawrence saw a postillion and stable-boy about his own size playing at pitch-farthing. He stood by



watching them for a few minutes. 'I begun with but one half-penny,' cried the stable-boy with an oath, 'and now I've got two-pence!' added he, jingling the half-pence in his waistcoat pocket. Lawrence was moved at the sound, and said to himself, 'If I begin with one half-penny, I may end like him with having two-pence; and it is easier to play at pitch-farthing than to work.'

So he stepped forward, presenting his half-penny, offering to toss up with the stable boy, who, after looking him full in the face, accepted the proposal, and threw his half-penny into the air. 'Head or tail!' cried he. 'Head,' replied Lawrence, and it came up head. He seized the penny, surprised at his own success, and would have gone instantly to have laid it out in nuts; but the stable-boy stopped him, and tempted him to throw again. This time he lost; he threw again and won; and so he went on, sometimes losing, but most frequently winning, till half the morning was gone. At last, however, he chanced to win twice running, and, finding himself master of three half pence, said he would play no more. The stable-boy, grumbling, swore he would have his revenge another time, and Lawrence went and bought the nuts. 'It is a good thing,' said he to himself, 'to play at pitch-farthing: the next time I want a half-penny, I'll not ask my father for it, nor go to work neither.' Satisfied with this resolution he sat down to crack his nuts at his leisure, upon the horse-block in the inn-yard. Here, whilst he eat, he overheard the conversation of the stable-boys and postillions. At first their shouting oaths and loud wrangling frightened and shocked him; for Lawrence, though a *lazy*, had not yet learned to be a *wicked* boy. But, by degrees, he was accustomed to their swearing and quarrelling, and took a delight and interest in their disputes and battles. As this was an amusement which he could enjoy without any sort of exertion on his part, he soon grew so fond of it, that every day he returned to the stable-yard, and the horse-block became his constant seat. Here he found some relief from the insupportable fatigue of doing nothing, and here hour after hour, with his elbows on his knees, and his head on his hands, he sat the spectator of wickedness. Gaming, cheating, and lying, soon became familiar to

him ; and, to complete his ruin, he formed a sudden and close intimacy with the stable-boy with whom he had first began to game—a very bad boy. The consequences of this intimacy we shall presently see. But it is now time to inquire what little Jem has been doing all this while.

One day, after he had finished his task, the gardener asked him to stay a little while, to help him to carry some geranium pots into the hall. Jem, always active and obliging, readily stayed from play, and was carrying in a heavy flower-pot, when his mistress crossed the hall. ‘What a terrible litter!’ said she, ‘you are amaking here—why don’t you wipe your shoes upon the mat?’ Jem turned round to look for the mat, but he saw none. ‘O,’ said the lady, recollecting herself, ‘I can’t blame you, for there is no mat.’ ‘No, ma’am,’ said the gardener, ‘nor I dont know when, if ever, the man will bring home those mats you bespoke, ma’am.’—‘I am very sorry to hear that,’ said the lady, ‘I wish we could find somebody who would do them, if he can’t—I should not care what sort of mats they were, so that one could wipe one’s feet on them.’ Jem, as he was sweeping away the litter, when he heard these last words, said to himself, ‘perhaps I could make a mat.’ And all the way home, as he trudged along whistling, he was thinking over a scheme for making mats, which, however bold it may appear, he did not despair of executing with patience and industry. Many were the difficulties which his ‘*prophetic eye*’ foresaw ; but he felt within himself that spirit, which spurs men on to great enterprises, and makes them ‘trample on impossibilities.’

He recollected, in the first place, that he had seen Lazy Lawrence, whilst he lounged upon the gate, twist a bit of heath into different shapes, and he thought that if he could find some way of plaiting heath firmly together, it would make a very pretty green, soft mat, which would do very well for one to wipe one’s shoes on. About a mile from his mother’s house, on the common which Jem rode over when he went to farmer Truck’s for the giant-strawberries, he remembered to have seen a great quantity of this heath ; and, as it was now only six o’clock in the evening, he knew that he should have time to feed

Lightfoot, stroke him, go to the common, return, and make one trial of his skill before he went to bed.

Lightfoot carried him swiftly to the common, and there Jem gathered as much of the heath as he thought he should want. But what toil, what time, what pains did it cost him, before he could make any thing like a mat! Twenty times he was ready to throw aside the heath, and give up his project, from impatience of repeated disappointments. But still he persevered. Nothing *truly great* can be accomplished without toil and time. Two hours he worked before he went to bed. All his play hours the next day he spent at his mat; which, in all, made five hours of fruitless attempts—The sixth, however, repaid him for the labours of the other five; he conquered his grand difficulty of fastening the heath substantially together, and at length completely finished a mat, which far surpassed his most sanguine expectations. He was extremely happy—sung, danced round it—whistled—looked at it again and again, and could hardly leave off looking at it when it was time to go to bed. He laid it by his bed-side, that he might see it the moment he awoke in the morning.

And now came the grand pleasure of carrying it to his mistress. She looked full as much surprised as he expected, when she saw it, and when she heard who made it. After having duly admired it, she asked him how much he expected for his mat. ‘Expect!—Nothing, ma’am,’ said Jem; ‘I meant to give it you, if you’d have it; I did not mean to sell it. I made it at my play hours, and I was very happy making it; and I’m very glad too that you like it; and if you please to keep it ma’am—that’s all.’—‘But that’s not all,’ said the lady. ‘Spend your time no more in weeding in my garden, you can employ yourself much better; you shall have the reward of your ingenuity as well as of your industry. Make as many more such mats as you can, and I will take care and dispose of them for you.’—‘Thank’e, ma’am,’ said Jem, making his best bow, for he thought by the lady’s looks that she meant to do him a favour, though he repeated to himself, ‘dispose of them,’ what does that mean?

The next day he went to work to make more mats, and he soon learned to make them so well and quickly,

that he was surprised at his own success. In every one he made he found less difficulty, so that, instead of making two, he could soon make four, in a day. In a fortnight he made eighteen. It was Saturday night when he finished, and he carried, at three journeys, his eighteen mats to his mistress's house; piled them all up in the hall, and stood with his hat off, with a look of proud humility, beside the pile, waiting for his mistress's appearance. Presently a folding door at one end of the hall, opened, and he saw his mistress, with a great many gentlemen and ladies rising from several tables.

'Oh! there is my little boy, and his mats,' cried the lady; and, followed by all the rest of the company, she came into the hall. Jem modestly retired whilst they looked at his mats; but in a minute or two his mistress beckoned to him, and, when he came into the middle of the circle, he saw that his pile of mats had disappeared. 'Well,' said the lady smiling, 'what do you see that makes you look so surprised?'—'That all my mats are gone,' said Jem; 'but you are very welcome.'—'Are we?' said the lady; 'well take up your hat, and go home then, for you see that it is getting late, and you know Lightfoot will wonder what's become of you.' Jem turned round to take up his hat which he had left on the floor.

But how his countenance changed! the hat was heavy with shillings. Every one who had taken a mat had put in two shillings; so that for the eighteen mats he had got thirty-six shillings. 'Thirty-six shillings;' said the lady; 'five and seven-pence I think you told me you had earned already—how much does that make? I must add, I believe, one other sixpence to make out your two guineas.'—'Two guineas!' exclaimed Jem, not quite conquering his bashfulness, for at the moment he forgot where he was, and saw nobody that was by. 'Two guineas!' cried he, clapping his hands together—'Oh Lightfoot!—Oh mother!' Then recollecting himself, he saw his mistress, whom he now looked up to quite as a friend. 'Will you thank them all' said he, scarcely daring to glance his eye round upon the company, 'will you thank 'em, for you know I don't know how to thank 'em *rightly*.' Every body thought, however, that they had been thanked *rightly*.

‘Now we won’t keep you any longer—only,’ said his mistress, ‘I have one thing to ask you, that I may be by when you shew your treasure to your mother.’—‘Come, then,’ said Jem, come with me now.’—‘Not now,’ said the lady laughing, ‘but I will come to Ashton to-morrow evening; perhaps your mother can find me a few strawberries.’

‘That she will,’ said Jem; ‘I’ll search the garden myself.’ He now went home, but felt it a great restraint to wait till to-morrow evening before he told his mother. To console himself he flew to the stable: ‘Lightfoot, you’re not to be sold to-morrow! poor fellow!’ said he, patting him, and then could not refrain from counting out his money. Whilst he was intent upon this, Jem was startled by a noise at the door: somebody was trying to pull up the latch. It opened, and there came in Lazy Lawrence, with a boy in a red jacket, who had a cock under his arm. They started when they got into the middle of the stable, and when they saw Jem, who had been at first hidden by the horse.

‘We—we—we came’—stammered Lazy Lawrence—‘I mean, I came to—to—to—’ ‘To ask you,’ continued the stable-boy in a bold tone, ‘whether you will go with us to the cock-fight on Monday? See, I’ve a fine cock here, and Lawrence told me you were a great friend of his, so I came.’

Lawrence now attempted to say something in praise of the pleasures of cock-fighting, and in recommendation of his new companion. But Jem looked at the stable-boy with dislike, and a sort of dread; then turning his eyes upon the cock with a look of compassion, said in a low voice to Lawrence, ‘Shall you like to stand by and see its eyes pecked out?’—‘I don’t know,’ said Lawrence, ‘as to that; but they say a cock-fight’s a fine sight, and its no more cruel in me to go than another; and a great many go; and I’ve nothing else to do, so I shall go.’—‘But I have something else to do,’ said Jem, laughing, ‘so I shall not go.’—‘But,’ continued Lawrence, ‘you know Monday is the great Bristol fair, and one must be merry then, of all days in the year.’—‘One day in the year, sure there’s no harm in being merry,’ said the stable-boy. ‘I hope not,’ said Jem; for I know,

for my part, I am merry every day in the year.'—'That's very odd,' said Lawrence; 'but I know, for my part, I would not for all the world miss going to the fair, for at least it will be something to talk of for half a year after—come, you'll go, won't you?'—'No,' said Jem, still looking as if he did not like to talk before the ill-looking stranger. 'Then what will you do with all your money?'—'I'll tell you about that another time,' whispered Jem; 'and don't you go to see that cock's eyes pecked out; it won't make you merry, I'm sure.'—'If I had any thing else to divert me,' said Lawrence, hesitating and yawning.—'Come,' cried the stable-boy, seizing his stretching arm, 'come along,' cried he; and, pulling him away from Jem, upon whom he cast a look of extreme contempt, 'leave him alone, he's not the sort.'—'What a fool you are,' said he to Lawrence, the moment he got him out of the stable, 'you might have known he would not go—else we should have trimmed him out of his four and seven-pence. But how came you to talk of four and seven-pence; I saw in the manger a hat full of silver.'—'Indeed!' exclaimed Lawrence. 'Yes, indeed—but why did you stammer so when we first got in? you had like to have blown us all up.'—'I was so ashamed,' said Lawrence, hanging down his head. 'Ashamed! but you must not talk of shame now you are in for it, and I shan't let you off: you owe us half a crown, recollect and I must be paid to-night; so see and get the money some how or other.' After a considerable pause he added, 'I'll answer for it he'd never miss half a crown out of all that silver.'—'But to steal,' said Lawrence, drawing back with horror—'I never thought I should come to that—and from poor Jem too—the money that he has worked so hard for too.'—'But it is not stealing; we don't mean to steal; only to borrow it: and, if we win, as we certainly shall, at the cock-fight, pay it back again, and he'll never know any thing of the matter; and what harm will it do him? Besides, what signifies talking, you can't go to the cock-fight, or the fair either, if you don't; and I tell ye we don't mean to steal it; we'll pay it again on Monday night.' Lawrence made no reply, and they parted without his coming to any determination.

Here let us pause in our story—we are almost afraid to go on—the rest is very shocking—our little readers will shudder as they read. But it is better that they should know the truth, and see what the idle boy came to at last.

In the dead of the night Lawrence heard somebody tap at his window. He knew well who it was, for this was the signal agreed upon between him and his wicked companion. He trembled at the thoughts of what he was about to do, and lay quite still, with his head under the bed-clothes, till he heard the second tap. Then he got up, dressed himself, and opened his window. It was almost even with the ground. His companion said to him in a hollow voice, 'Are you ready.' He made no answer, but got out of the window and followed. When he got to the stable, a black cloud was just passing over the moon, and was quite dark. 'Where are you?' whispered Lawrence, groping about, 'where are you? Speak to me.' 'I am here; give me your hand.' Lawrence stretched out his hand. 'Is that your hand?' said the wicked boy, as Lawrence laid hold of him; 'how cold it felt.'—'Let us go back,' said Lawrence; 'It is time yet.'—'It is no time to go back,' replied the other opening the door; 'you've gone too far now to go back:' and he pushed Lawrence into the stable.—'Have you found it—take care of the horse—have you done?—what are you about?—make haste, I hear a noise,' said the stable-boy, who watched at the door. 'I am feeling for the half-crown, but I can't find it.'—'Bring all together.' He brought Jem's broken flower-pot, with all the money in it to the door.

The black cloud was now passed over the moon, and the light shone full upon them.—'What do we stand here for?' said the stable-boy, snatching the flower-pot out of Lawrence's trembling hands, and pulled him away from the door. 'Good God!' cried Lawrence, 'you won't take all—you said you'd only take half a crown, and pay it back on Monday—you said you'd only take half a crown!'—'Hold your tongue,' replied the other walking on, deaf to all remonstrances—'If I am to be hanged ever, it shan't be for half a crown.' Lawrence's blood ran cold in his veins, and he felt as if all his hair

stood on end. Not another word passed. His accomplice carried off the money, and Lawrence crept with all the horrors of guilt upon him, to his restless bed. All night he was starting from frightful dreams; or else, broad awake, he lay listening to every small noise, unable to stir, and scarcely daring to breathe—tormented by that most dreadful of all kinds of fear, that fear which is the constant companion of an evil conscience. He thought the morning would never come; but when it was day, when he heard the birds sing, and saw every thing look cheerful as usual, he felt still more miserable. It was Sunday morning, and the bell rang for church. All the children of the village, dressed in their Sunday clothes, innocent and gay, and little Jem, the best and gayest amongst them, went flocking by his door to church. ‘Well, Lawrence,’ said Jem, pulling his coat as he passed, and saw Lawrence leaning against his father’s door, ‘what makes you look so black?’ ‘I!’ said Lawrence, starting, ‘why do you say that I look black?’—‘Nay then,’ said Jem, ‘you look white enough now, if that will please you; for you’re turned as pale as death.’—‘Pale!’ replied Lawrence, not knowing what he said; and turned abruptly away, for he dared not stand another look of Jem’s; conscious that guilt was written in his face, he shunned every eye. He would now have given the world to have thrown off the load of guilt which lay upon his mind; he longed to follow Jem, to fall upon his knees, and confess all; dreading the moment when Jem should discover his loss, Lawrence dared not stay at home, and not knowing what to do, or where to go, he mechanically went to his old haunt at the stable-yard, and lurked thereabouts all day, with his accomplice, who tried in vain to quiet his fears and raise his spirits, by talking of the next day’s cock-fight. It was agreed, that as soon as the dusk of the evening came on, they should go together into a certain lonely field, and there divide their booty.

In the mean time Jem, when he returned from church, was very full of business, preparing for the reception of his mistress, of whose intended visit he had informed his mother; and, whilst she was arranging the kitchen, and their little parlour, he ran to search the strawberry-



beds. 'Why, my Jem, how merry you are to-day!' said his mother, when he came in with the strawberries, and was jumping about the room playfully. 'Now keep those spirits of yours, Jem, till you want 'em, and don't let it come upon you all at once. Have it in mind that to-morrow's fair day, and Lightfoot must go. I bid farmer Truck call for him to-night; he said he'd take him along with his own, and he'll be here just now—and then I know how it will be with you Jem!'—'So do I!' cried Jem, swallowing his secret with great difficulty, and then tumbling head over heels four times running. A carriage passed the window and stopped at the door. Jem ran out; it was his mistress. She came in smiling, and soon made the old woman smile too, by praising the neatness of every thing in the house. But we shall pass over, however important they were deemed at the time, the praises of the strawberries, and of 'my grandmother's china plate.' Another knock was heard at the door. 'Run, Jem,' said his mother, 'I hope it's our milk-woman with cream for the lady.'—No; it was farmer Truck come for Lightfoot. The old woman's countenance fell. 'Fetch him out, dear,' said she, turning to her son; but Jem was gone; he flew out to the stable the moment he saw the flap of farmer Truck's great coat.—'Sit ye down farmer,' said the old woman, after they had waited about five minutes in expectation of Jem's return. 'You'd best sit down, if the lady will give you leave; for he'll not hurry himself back again. My boy's a fool, madam, about that there horse.' Trying to laugh, she added, 'I knew how Lightfoot and he would be loath enough to part—he won't bring him out till the last minute; so do sit ye down neighbour.' The farmer had scarcely sat down, when Jem, with a pale wild countenance, came back. 'What's the matter?' said his mistress. 'God bless the boy!' said his mother looking at him quite frightened, whilst he tried to speak, but could not. She went up to him, and then leaning his head against her, he cried, 'It's gone!—it's all gone!' and, bursting into tears, he sobbed as if his little heart would break. 'What's gone, love?' said his mother. 'My two guineas—Lightfoot's two guineas. I went to fetch 'em to give you, mammy! but the broken flower-pot that I put them in,

and all's gone!—quite gone!' repeated he, checking his sobs. 'I saw them safe last night, and was shewing 'em to Lightfoot; and I was so glad to think I had earned them all myself; and I thought how surprised you'd look, and how glad you'd be, and how you'd kiss me, and all!'

His mother listened to him with the greatest surprise, whilst his mistress stood in silence, looking first at the old woman, and then at Jem, with a penetrating eye, as if she suspected the truth of his story, and was afraid of becoming the dupe of her own compassion. 'This is a very strange thing!' said she, gravely. 'How came you to leave all your money in a broken flower-pot in the stable? How came you not to give it to your mother to take care of?'—'why, don't you remember,' said Jem, looking up in the midst of his tears; 'why don't you remember you your own self bid me not tell her about it till you were by.'—'And did you not tell her?'—'Nay, ask mammy,' said Jem, a little offended; and, when afterwards the lady went on questioning him in a severe manner, as if she did not believe him, he at last made no answer. 'Oh, Jem! Jem! why don't you speak to the lady?' said his mother. 'I have spoke, and spoke the truth,' said Jem, proudly, 'and she did not believe me.'

Still the lady, who had lived too long in the world to be without suspicion, maintained a cold manner, and determined to wait the event without interfering, saying only, she hoped the money would be found; and advised Jem to have done crying. 'I have done,' said Jem, 'I shall cry no more.' And as he had the greatest command over himself, he actually did not shed another tear, not even when the farmer got up to go, saying, he could wait no longer. Jem silently went to bring out Lightfoot.—The lady now took her seat where she could see all that passed at the open parlour window.—The old woman stood at the door, and several idle people of the village who had gathered round the lady's carriage examining it, turned about to listen. In a minute or two Jem appeared, with a steady countenance, leading Lightfoot; and, when he came up, without saying a word, put the bridle into farmer Truck's hand. 'He *has been* a good horse,' said the farmer. 'He *is* a good horse!'

cried Jem, and threw his arm over Lightfoot's neck, hiding his own face as he leaned upon him.

At this instant a party of milk-women went by; and one of them having set down her pail, came behind Jem, and gave him a pretty smart blow upon the back.—He looked up.—‘And don't you know me?’ said she. ‘I forget,’ said Jem; ‘I think I have seen your face before, but I forget.’—‘Do you so? and you'll tell me just now,’ said she, half opening her hand, ‘that you forgot who gave you this, and who charged you not to part with it too.’ Here she quite opened her large hand, and on the palm of it appeared Jem's silver penny. ‘Where?’ exclaimed Jem, seizing it, ‘oh where did you find it? and have you?—oh tell me, have you got the rest of my money?’—‘I dont know nothing of your money—I dont know what you would be at,’ said the milkwoman. ‘But where, pray tell me, where did you find this?’—‘With them that you gave it to, I suppose,’ said the milkwoman, turning away suddenly to take up her milk-pail. But now Jem's mistress called to her through the window, begging her to stop, and joining in his entreaties to know how she came by the silver penny.

‘Why madam,’ said she, taking up the corner of her apron, ‘I came by it in an odd way too—You must know my Betty is sick, so I come with the milk myself, though it's not what I'm used to; for my Betty—you know my Betty,’ said she turning round to the old woman, ‘my Betty serves you, and she's a tight and stirring lassy, ma'am, I can assure—’ ‘Yes, I don't doubt it,’ said the lady impatiently; ‘but about the silver penny?’—‘Why, that's true; as I was coming along all alone, for the rest came around, and I came a short cut across yon field—No, you can't see it, madam where you stand—but if you were here—’ ‘I see it—I know it,’ said Jem, out of breath with anxiety. ‘Well—well—I rested my pail upon the stile, and sets me down awhile, and there comes out of the hedge—I don't know well how, for they startled me so I'd like to have thrown down my milk—two boys, one about the size of he,’ said she pointing to Jem, ‘and one a matter taller, but ill-looking like, so I did not think to stir to make way for them, and they were like in a desperate hurry: so, without waiting for the stile, one of 'em pulled at the gate, and when it would not open (for

it was tied with a pretty stout cord) one of 'em whips out with his knife and cuts it——

'Now have you a knife about you, Sir?' continued the milkwoman to the farmer. He gave her his knife.

'Here now ma'am, just sticking as it were here, between the blade and the haft, was the silver penny. He took no notice, but when he opened it, out it falls; still he takes no heed, but cuts the cord as I said before, and through the gate they went, and out of sight in half a minute. I picks up the penny, for my heart misgave me that it was the very one husband had had a long time, and had given against my voice to he,' pointing to Jem; 'and I charged him not to part with it; and, ma'am, when I looked I knew it by the mark, so I thought I would shew it to *he*,' again pointing to Jem, 'and let him give it back to those it belongs to.'—'It belongs to me,' said Jem, 'I never gave it to any body—but—' 'But,' cried the farmer, 'those boys have robbed him—it is they who have all his money.'—'Oh, which way did they go?' cried Jem, 'I'll run after them.'

'No, no,' said the lady, calling to her servant; and she desired him to take his horse and ride after them. Aye, added farmer Truck, 'do you take the road, and I'll take the field way, and I'll be bound we'll have 'em presently.'

Whilst they were gone in pursuit of the thieves, the lady who was now thoroughly convinced of Jem's truth, desired her coachman would produce what she had ordered him to bring with him that evening. Out of the boot of the carriage the coachman immediately produced a new saddle and bridle.

How Jem's eyes sparkled when the saddle was thrown upon Lightfoot's back! 'Put it on your horse yourself, Jem,' said the lady—'It is yours.'

Confused reports of Lightfoot's splendid accoutrements, of the pursuit of the thieves, and of the fine and generous lady who was standing at dame Preston's window, quickly spread through the village, and drew every body from their houses. They crowded round Jem to hear the story. The children especially, who were all fond of him, expressed the strongest indignation against the thieves. Every eye was on the stretch; and now

some, who had run down the lane, came back shouting, 'Here they are! they've got the thieves!'

The footman on horseback carried one boy before him; and the farmer, striding along, dragged another. The latter had on a red jacket, which little Jem immediately recollected, and scarcely dared lift his eyes to look at the boy on horseback. 'Good God' said he to himself, 'it must be—yet surely it can't be Lawrence!' The footman rode on as fast as the people would let him. The boy's hat was slouched, and his head hung down, so that nobody could see his face.

At this instant there was a disturbance in the crowd. A man who was half drunk pushed his way forwards, swearing that nobody should stop him; that he had a right to see; and he *would* see. And so he did; for, forcing through all resistance, he staggered up to the footman just as he was lifting down the boy he had carried before him. 'I *will*—I tell you I *will* see the thief!' cried the drunken man, pushing up the boy's hat—It was his own son.—'Lawrence!' exclaimed the wretched father. The shock sobered him at once, and he hid his face in his hands.

There was an awful silence. Lawrence fell on his knees, and in a voice that could scarcely be heard, made a full confession of all the circumstances of his guilt. 'Such a young creature so wicked! What could put such wickedness into your head.'—'Bad company,' said Lawrence. 'And how came you—what brought you into bad company?'—'I don't know except it was idleness.' While this was saying, the farmer was emptying Lazy Lawrence's pockets; and when the money appeared, all his former companions in the village looked at each other with astonishment and terror. Their parents grasped their little hands closer, and cried, 'Thank God! he is not my son—how often, when he was little, we used, as he lounged about, to tell him that idleness was the root of all evil.'

As for the hardened wretch his accomplice, every one was impatient to have him sent to gaol. He had put on a bold, insolent countenance, till he heard Lawrence's confession; till the money was found upon him; and he heard the milkwoman declare that she would swear to

the silver penny which he had dropped. Then he turned pale, and betrayed the strongest signs of fear. 'We must take him before the justice,' said the farmer, 'and he'll be lodged in Bristol gaol.' 'Oh!' said Jem, springing forwards when Lawrence's hands were going to be tied, 'let him go—won't you—can't you let him go?'—'Yes, madam, for mercy's sake,' said Jem's mother to the lady, 'think what a disgrace to his family to be sent to gaol.' His father stood by wringing his hands in an agony of despair. 'It's all my fault,' cried he: 'I brought him up in *idleness*.'—'But, he'll never be idle any more,' said Jem; 'won't you speak for him, ma'am?'—'Don't ask the lady to speak for him,' said the farmer; 'it's better he should go to bridewell now, than to the gallows by and by.'

Nothing more was said, for every body felt the truth of the farmer's speech. Lawrence was sent to bridewell for a month, and the stable-boy was transported to Botany Bay.

During Lawrence's confinement, Jem often visited him, and carried him such little presents as he could afford to give; and Jem could afford to be *generous* because he was *industrious*. Lawrence's heart was touched by his kindness, and his example struck him so forcibly, that, when his confinement was ended, he resolved to set immediately to work; and to the astonishment of all who knew him, soon became remarkable for industry; he was found early and late at his work, established a new character, and for ever lost the name of *Lazy Lawrence*.

# TARLTON.



**Y**OUNG HARDY was educated by Mr. Trueman, a very good master, at one of the schools in ————shire. He was honest, obedient, active, and good-natured ; so that he was esteemed and beloved by his master, and by his companions. Beloved by all his companions who were good, he did not desire to be loved by the bad ; nor was he at all vexed or ashamed, when idle, mischievous, or dishonest boys attempted to plague or ridicule him. His friend Loveit, on the contrary, wished to be universally liked ; and his highest ambition was to be thought the best natured boy in the school :—and so he was. He usually went by the name of *poor Loveit*, and every body pitied him when he got into disgrace, which he frequently did ; for though he had a good disposition, he was often led to do things, which he knew to be wrong, merely because he could never have the courage to say *no* ; because he was afraid to offend the ill-natured, and could not bear to be laughed at by fools.

One fine autumn evening, all the boys were permitted to go out to play in a pleasant green meadow near the school. Loveit, and another boy called Tarlton, began to play a game at battledore and shuttlecock, and a large party stood by to look on; for they were the best players at battledore and shuttlecock in the school, and this was a trial of skill between them. When they had kept it up to three hundred and twenty, the game became very interesting: the arms of the combatants grew so tired, that they could scarcely wield the battledores:—the shuttlecock began to waver in the air; now it almost touched the ground, and now, to the astonishment of the spectators mounted again high over their heads; yet the strokes became feebler and feebler; and ‘now Loveit!’ ‘now Tarlton!’ resounded on all sides. For another minute the victory was doubtful; but at length, the setting sun shining full in Loveit’s face so dazzled his eyes, that he could no longer see the shuttlecock, and it fell at his feet.

After the first shout for Tarlton’s triumph was over, every body exclaimed, ‘Poor Loveit!—he’s the best natured fellow in the world!—what a pity that he did not stand with his back to the sun.’

‘Now I dare you all to play another game with me,’ cried Tarlton, vauntingly; and as he spoke, he tossed the shuttlecock up with all his force: with so much force, that it went over the hedge, and dropped into a lane, which went close behind the field. ‘Hey-day!’ said Tarlton, ‘what shall we do now!’

The boys were strictly forbidden to go into the lane; and it was upon their promise not to break this command that they were allowed to play in the adjoining field.

No other shuttlecock was to be had, and their play was stopped. They stood on the top of the bank peeping over the hedge. ‘I see it yonder,’ said Tarlton; ‘I wish any body would get it. One could get over the gate at the bottom of the field, and be back again in half a minute,’ added he, looking at Loveit. ‘But you know we must not go into the lane,’ said Loveit, hesitatingly. ‘Pugh!’ said Tarlton, ‘why now what harm could it do?’—‘I don’t know,’ said Loveit, drumming upon his battledore; ‘but—’ ‘You don’t know man! why then what



are you afraid of? I ask you,' Loveit coloured, went on drumming, and again, in a lower voice, said '*he didn't know.*' But upon Tarlton's repeating, in a more insolent tone, 'I ask you, man, what you're afraid of?' he suddenly left off drumming, and looking round, said, 'he was not afraid of any thing that he knew of.'—'Yes, but you are,' said Hardy coming forward. 'Am I,' said Loveit; 'of what, pray, am I afraid?' 'Of doing wrong!' '*Afraid of doing wrong!*' repeated Tarlton mimicking him, so that he made every body laugh. 'Now hadn't you better say afraid of being flogged?'—'No,' said Hardy, coolly, after the laugh had somewhat subsided, 'I am as little afraid of being flogged as you are, Tarlton; but I meant—' 'No matter what you meant; why should you interfere with your wisdom, and your meanings; nobody thought of asking *you* to stir a step for us; but we asked Loveit, because he's the best fellow in the world.'—'And for that very reason you should not ask him, because you know he can't refuse you any thing.' 'Indeed though,' cried Loveit, piqued, '*there* you're mistaken, for I could refuse if I chose it.' Hardy smiled; and Loveit, half afraid of his contempt, and half afraid of Tarlton's ridicule, stood doubtful, and again had recourse to his battledore, which he balanced most curiously upon his forefinger. 'Look at him!—now do look at him!' cried Tarlton; 'did you ever in your life see any body look so silly!—Hardy has him quite under thumb; he's so mortally afraid of Parson Prig, that he dare not, for the soul of him, turn either of his eyes from the tip of his nose; look how he squints!'—'I don't squint,' said Loveit, looking up, 'and nobody has me under his thumb; and what Hardy said, was only for fear I should get into disgrace:—he's the best friend I have.' Loveit spoke this with more than usual spirit, for both his heart and his pride were touched. 'Come along then,' said Hardy, taking him by the arm in an affectionate manner; and he was just going, when Tarlton called after him, 'Ay, go along with its best friend, and take care it does not get into a scrape;—goodbye, Little Panado!'—'Who do they call Little Panado,' said Loveit, turning his head hastily back. 'Never mind,' said Hardy, 'what does it signify?'—'No,' said Loveit, 'to be sure it does not signify; but one does

not like to be called Little Panado : besides,' added he, after going a few steps farther, 'they'll all think it so ill-natured.—I had better go back, and just tell them, that I'm sorry I can't get their shuttlecock ;—do come back with me.'—'No,' said Hardy, 'I can't go back : and you'd better not.' 'But, I assure you, I won't stay a minute ; wait for me,' added Loveit ; and he slunk back again to prove that he was not Little Panado.

Once returned, the rest followed of course ; for to support his character for good-nature he was obliged to yield to the entreaties of his companions ; and to shew his spirit, leaped over the gate, amidst the acclamations of the little mob :—he was quickly out of sight.

'Here,' cried he, returning in about five minutes, quite out of breath, 'I've got the shuttlecock ; and I'll tell you what I've seen,' cried he, panting for breath. 'What ?' cried every body eagerly. 'Why, just at the turn of the corner, at the end of the lane,' panting. 'Well,' said Tarlton, impatiently, 'do go on.'—'Let me just take breath first.' 'Pugh ! never mind your breath.'—'Well then, just at the turn of the corner, at the end of the lane, as I was looking about for the shuttlecock, I heard a great rustling somewhere near me, and so I looked where it could come from ; and I saw in a nice little garden, on the opposite side of the way, a boy, about as big as Tarlton, sitting in a great tree, shaking the branches ; and at every shake down there came such a shower of fine large rosy apples, they made my mouth water : so I called to the boy, to beg one ; but he said, he could not give me one, for that they were his grandfather's ; and just at that minute, from behind a gooseberry bush, up popped the uncle—the grandfather poked his head out of the window ; so I ran off as fast as my legs would carry me, though I heard him bawling after me all the way.'

'And let him bawl,' cried Tarlton, 'he shan't bawl for nothing ; I'm determin'd we'll have some of his fine large rosy apples before I sleep to night.'—At this speech a general silence ensued ; every body kept their eyes fixed upon Tarlton, except Loveit, who looked down, apprehensive that he should be drawn on much farther than he intended.—'Oh, indeed !' said he to himself, 'as Hardy told me, I had better not have come back !'

Regardless of this confusion, Tarlton continued, 'But before I say any more, I hope we have no spies amongst us. If there is any one of you afraid to be flogged, let him march off this instant ;'—Loveit coloured, bit his lips, wished to go, but had not courage to move first.—He waited to see what every body else would do ;—nobody stirred ;—so Loveit stood still.

'Well then,' cried Tarlton, giving his hand to the boy next him, then to the next, your word and honour that you wont betray me ; but stand by me, and I'll stand by you.'—Each boy gave his hand, and his promise ; repeating 'stand by me and I'll stand by you.'—Loveit hung back till the last ; and had almost twisted off the button of the boy's coat who screened him, when Tarlton came up, holding out his hand, 'Come, Loveit, lad, you're in for it : Stand by me, and I'll stand by you.'—'Indeed, Tarlton,' expostulated he, without looking him in the face, 'I do wish you'd give up this scheme ; I dare say all the apples are gone by this time ;—I wish you would—Do, pray, give up this scheme.'—'What scheme, man ! you hav'n't heard it yet ; you may as well know your text before you begin preaching.' The corners of Loveit's mouth could not refuse to smile, though in his heart he felt not the slightest inclination to laugh. 'Why I don't know you, I declare I don't know you to-day,' said Tarlton ; 'you used to be the best natured, most agreeable lad in the world, and would do any thing one asked you ; but you're quite altered of late, as we were saying just now, when you skulked away with Hardy : come : do man, pluck up a little spirit, and be one of us, or you'll make us all *hate you*.' '*Hate me!*' repeated Loveit with terror ; 'no, surely, you won't all *hate me!*' and he mechanically stretched out his hand, which Tarlton shook violently, saying, '*Ay, now that's right.*'—'*Ay, now that's wrong!*' whispered Loveit's conscience ; but his conscience was of no use to him, for it was always overpowered by the voice of numbers ; and though he had the wish, he never had the power to do right. 'Poor Loveit ! I knew he would not refuse us,' cried his companions ; and even Tarlton, the moment he shook hands with him, despised him. It is certain that weakness of mind is despised both by the good and by the bad.

The league being thus formed, Tarlton assumed all the airs of a commander, explained his schemes, and laid the plan of attack upon the poor old man's apple-tree. It was the only one he had in the world. We shall not dwell upon their consultation, for the amusement of contriving such expeditions is often the chief thing which induces bad boys to engage in them.

There was a small window at the end of the back staircase, through which, between nine and ten o'clock at night, Tarlton, accompanied by Loveit and another boy, crept out. It was a moon-light night, and, after crossing the field, and climbing the gate, directed by Loveit, who now resolved to go through the affair with spirit, they proceeded down the lane with rash, yet fearful steps. At a distance Loveit saw the whitewashed cottage, and the apple-tree beside it: they quickened their pace, and with some difficulty scrambled through the hedge which fenced the garden, though not without being scratched and torn by the briars. Every thing was silent. Yet now and then at every rustling of the leaves they started, and their hearts beat violently. Once as Loveit was climbing the apple-tree, he thought he heard a door in the cottage open, and earnestly begged his companions to desist and return home. This however he could by no means persuade them to do, until they had filled their pockets with apples; then, to his great joy, they returned, crept in at the staircase window, and each retired, as softly as possible, to his own apartment.

Loveit slept in the room with Hardy, whom he had left fast asleep, and whom he now was extremely afraid of wakening. All the apples were emptied out of Loveit's pockets, and lodged with Tarlton till the morning, for fear the smell should betray the secret to Hardy. The room door was apt to creak, but it was opened with such precaution, that no noise could be heard, and Loveit found his friend as fast asleep as when he left him.

'Ah,' said he to himself, 'how quietly he sleeps! I wish I had been sleeping too.' The reproaches of Loveit's conscience, however, served no other purpose but to torment him; he had not sufficient strength of mind to be good. The very next night, in spite of all his fears, and

all his penitence, and all his resolutions, by a little fresh ridicule and persuasion he was induced to accompany the same party on a similar expedition. We must observe, that the necessity for continuing their depredations became stronger the third day; for though at first only a small party had been in the secret, by degrees it was divulged to the whole school: and it was necessary to secure secrecy by sharing the booty.

Every one was astonished that Hardy, with all his quickness and penetration, had not yet discovered their proceedings; but Loveit could not help suspecting, that he was not quite so ignorant as he appeared to be. Loveit had strictly kept his promise of secrecy, but he was by no means an artful boy; and in talking to his friend, conscious that he had something to conceal, he was perpetually on the point of betraying himself; then recollecting his engagement, he blushed, stammered, bungled; and upon Hardy's asking what he meant, would answer with a silly guilty countenance, that he did know; or abruptly break off, saying, 'Oh nothing! nothing at all!'

It was in vain that he urged Tarlton to permit him to consult his friend; a gloom overspread Tarlton's brow when he began to speak on the subject, and he always returned a peremptory refusal, accompanied with some such taunting expression as this—'I wish we had nothing to do with such a sneaking fellow. He'll betray us all I see, before we have done with him.'—'Well,' said Loveit to himself, 'so I am abused after all, and called a sneaking fellow for my pains; that's rather hard to be sure, when I've got so little by the job.'

In truth he had not got much, for in the division of the booty only one apple, and a half of another which was only half ripe, happened to fall to his share; though, to be sure, when they had all eaten their apples, he had the satisfaction to hear every body declare they were very sorry they had forgotten to offer some of theirs to '*poor Loveit!*'

In the mean time the visits to the apple-tree had been now too frequently repeated to remain concealed from the old man, who lived in the cottage. He used to examine his only tree very frequently, and missing numbers

of rosy apples which he had watched ripening, he, though not much prone to suspicion, began to think that there was something going wrong; especially as a gap was made in his hedge, and there were several small footsteps in his flower-beds.

The good old man was not at all inclined to give pain to any living creature, much less to children, of whom he was particularly fond. Nor was he in the least avaricious, for though he was not rich, he had enough to live upon, because he had been very industrious in his youth; and he was always very ready to part with the little he had; nor was he a cross old man. If any thing would have made him angry, it would have been the seeing his favourite tree robbed, as he had promised himself the pleasure of giving his red apples to his grand-children on his birth-day. However he looked up at the tree in sorrow rather than in anger, and leaning upon his staff, he began to consider what he had best do.

‘If I complain to their master,’ said he to himself, ‘they will certainly be flogged, and that I should be sorry for; yet they must not be let to go on stealing, that would be worse still, for that would surely bring them to the gallows in the end. Let me see—oh, ay, that will do; I will borrow farmer Kent’s dog Barker; he’ll keep them off, I’ll answer for it.’

Farmer Kent lent his dog Barker, cautioning his neighbour at the same time, to be sure to chain him well, for he was the fiercest mastiff in England. The old man, with farmer Kent’s assistance, chained him fast to the trunk of the apple-tree.

Night came, and Tarlton, Loveit, and his companions returned at the usual hour. Grown bolder now by frequent success, they came on talking and laughing. But the moment they had set their foot in the garden, the dog started up; and, shaking his chain as he sprang forward, barked with unremitting fury. They stood still as if fixed to the spot. There was just moon-light enough to see the dog. ‘Let us try the other side of the tree,’ said Tarlton. But to which every side they turned the dog flew round in an instant, barking with increased fury.

‘He’ll break his chain and tear us to pieces,’ cried Tarlton; and struck with terror, he immediately threw

down the basket he had brought with him, and betook himself to flight with the greatest precipitation.—‘Help me! oh, pray, help me! I can’t get through the hedge,’ cried Loveit in a lamentable tone, whilst the dog growled hideously, and sprang forward to the extremity of his chain.—‘I can’t get out! Oh, for God’s sake, stay for me one minute, dear Tarlton.’

He called in vain, he was left to struggle through his difficulties by himself, and of all his dear friends not one turned back to help him. At last, torn and terrified, he got through the hedge and ran home, despising his companions for their selfishness. Nor could he help observing, that Tarlton, with all his vaunted prowess was the first to run away from the appearance of danger. The next morning he could not help reproaching the party with their conduct.—‘Why could not you, any of you, stay one minute to help me?’ said he. ‘We did not hear you call,’ answered one. ‘I was so frightened,’ said another, ‘I would not have turned back for the whole world.’—‘And you, Tarlton?’—‘I,’ said Tarlton. ‘Had not I enough to do to take care of myself, you block-head? Every one for himself in this world!’ ‘So I see,’ said Loveit, gravely. ‘Well, man! is there any thing strange in that?’ ‘Strange! why yes, I thought you all loved me?’ ‘Lord, love you, lad! so we do; but we love ourselves better.’—‘Hardy would not have served me so, however,’ said Loveit, turning away in disgust. Tarlton was alarmed,—‘Pugh!’ said he, ‘what nonsense have you taken into your brain? Think no more about it. We are all very sorry, and beg your pardon; come, shake hands, forgive and forget.’ Loveit gave his hand, but gave it rather coldly—‘I forgive it with all my heart,’ said he, ‘but I cannot forget it so soon!’—‘Why then you are not such a good-humoured fellow as we thought you were. Surely you cannot bear malice, Loveit?’ Loveit smiled, and allowed that he certainly could not bear malice. ‘Well then come; you know at the bottom we all love you, and would do any thing in the world for you.’ Poor Loveit, flattered in his foible, began to believe that they did love him at the bottom, as they said, and even with his eyes open consented again to be duped.

‘How strange it is,’ thought he, ‘that I should set such value upon the love of those I despise! When I’m once out of this scrape, I’ll have no more to do with them, I’m determined.’

Compared with his friend Hardy, his new associates did indeed appear contemptible: for all this time Hardy had treated him with uniform kindness, avoided to pry into his secrets, yet seemed ready to receive his confidence if it had been offered.

After school in the evening, as he was standing silently beside Hardy, who was ruling a sheet of paper for him, Tarlton, in his brutal manner came up, and seizing him by the arm, cried, ‘Come along with me Loveit, I’ve something to say to you.’—‘I can’t come now,’ said Loveit, drawing away his arm.—‘Ah, do come now,’ said Tarlton in a voice of persuasion—‘Well, I’ll come presently.’—‘Nay, but do, pray; there’s a good fellow, come now, because I’ve something to say to you.’—‘What is it you’ve got to say to me? I wish you’d let me alone,’ said Loveit; yet at the same time he suffered himself to be led away.

Tarlton took particular pains to humour him and bring him into temper again; and even though he was not very apt to part with his play-things, went so far as to say, ‘Loveit, the other day you wanted a top; I’ll give you mine if you desire it.’—Loveit thanked him, and was overjoyed at the thoughts of possessing this top. ‘But what did you want to say to me just now?’—‘Aye, we’ll talk of that presently—not yet—when we get out of hearing.’—‘Nobody is near us,’ said Loveit.—‘Come a little farther, however,’ said Tarlton, looking round suspiciously.—‘Well now, well?’ ‘You know the dog that frightened us so last night?’—‘Yes,’—‘It will never frighten us again.’—‘Won’t it? how so?’—‘Look here,’ said Tarlton, drawing from his pocket something wrapped in a blue handkerchief.—‘What’s that?’ Tarlton opened it. ‘Raw meat!’ exclaimed Loveit. ‘How came you by it?’—‘Tom, the servant boy, Tom got it for me, and I’m to give him sixpence.’—‘And is it for the dog?’—‘Yes; I vowed I’d be revenged on him, and after all this he’ll never bark again.’—‘Never bark again! What do you mean?—Is it poison?’ exclaimed



Loveit, starting back with horror. 'Only poison for a dog,' said Tarlton, confused; 'you could not look more shocked if it was poison for a Christian.' Loveit stood for nearly a minute in profound silence. 'Tarlton,' said he, at last, in a changed tone and altered manner, 'I did not know you; I will have no more to do with you.'—'Nay, but stay,' said Tarlton, catching hold of his arm, 'stay; I was only joking.'—'Let go my arm, you were in earnest.'—'But then that was before I knew there was any harm. If you think there's any harm?'—'If,' said Loveit. 'Why you know, I might not know; for Tom told me it's a thing that's often done; ask Tom.'—'I'll ask nobody! Surely we know better what's right and wrong than Tom does.'—'But only just ask him, to hear what he'll say.'—'I don't want to hear what he'll say,' cried Loveit, vehemently. 'The dog will die in agonies—in horrid agonies; There was a dog poisoned at my father's, I saw him in the yard.—Poor creature! he lay, and howled, and withered himself!' 'Poor creature!—Well, there's no harm done now,' cried Tarlton, in a hypocritical tone. But though he thought fit to dissemble with Loveit, he was thoroughly determined in his purpose.

Poor Loveit, in haste to get away, returned to his friend Hardy; but his mind was in such agitation, that he neither talked nor moved like himself; and two or three times his heart was so full that he was ready to burst into tears,

'How good-natured you are to me,' said he to Hardy, as he was trying vainly to entertain him; 'but if you knew.'—Here he stopped short, for the bell for evening prayer rang, and they all took their places and knelt down. After prayers, as they were going to bed, Loveit stopped Tarlton—'Well!' asked he, in an inquiring manner, fixing his eyes upon him;—'Well!' replied Tarlton in an audacious tone, as if he meant to set his inquiring eye at defiance;—'what do you mean to do to-night?'—'To go sleep, as you do, I suppose, replied Tarlton, turning away abruptly and whistling as he walked off.

'Oh, he has certainly changed his mind!' said Loveit to himself, 'else he could not whistle.' About ten mi-

minutes after this, as he and Hardy were undressing, Hardy suddenly recollected that he had left his new kite out upon the grass. 'Oh,' said he, 'it will be quite spoiled before morning!'—'Call Tom,' said Loveit, 'and bid him bring it in for you in a minute.' They both went to the top of the stairs to call Tom; no one answered. They called again louder, 'is Tom below?'—'I'm here,' answered he at last, coming out of Tarlton's room with a look of mixed embarrassment and effrontery. And as he was receiving Hardy's commission, Loveit saw the corner of the blue handkerchief hanging out of his pocket. This excited fresh suspicions in Loveit's mind; but, without saying one word, he immediately stationed himself at the window in his room, which looked out towards the lane; and as the moon was risen, he could see if any one passed that way. 'What are you doing there?' said Hardy, after he had been watching some time; 'why don't you come to bed?' Loveit returned no answer, but continued standing at the window. Nor did he watch long in vain: presently he saw Tom gliding slowly along a by-path, and get over the gate into the lane.

'He's gone to do it!' exclaimed Loveit aloud, with an emotion which he could not command. 'Who's gone! to do what?' cried Hardy, starting up. 'How cruel, how wicked!' continued Loveit. 'What's cruel—what's wicked? speak out at once!' returned Hardy, in that commanding tone, which, in moments of danger, strong minds feel themselves entitled to assume towards weak ones. Loveit instantly, though in an incoherent manner, explained the affair to him. Scarcely had the words passed his lips, when Hardy sprang up, and began dressing himself without saying one syllable. 'For God's sake, what are you going to do?' said Loveit in great anxiety. 'They'll never forgive me! don't betray me! they'll never forgive me! pray speak to me! only say you won't betray us!'—'I will not betray you, trust to me,' said Hardy; and he left the room, and Loveit stood in amazement: whilst, in the mean time, Hardy, in hopes of overtaking Tom before the fate of the poor dog was decided, ran with all possible speed across the meadow, and then the lane. He came up with Tom just as he was climbing the bank into the old man's garden. Hardy, too much

out of breath to speak, seized hold of him, dragged him down, detaining him with a firm grasp whilst he panted for utterance—‘What, master Hardy, is it you? what’s the matter? what do you want?’—‘I want the poisoned meat that you have in your pocket.’—‘Who told you that I had any such thing?’ said Tom, clapping his hand upon his guilty pocket. ‘Give it me quietly, and I’ll let you off.’—‘Sir, upon my word I hav’n’t! I didn’t! I don’t know what you mean,’ said Tom trembling, though he was by far the strongest of the two; ‘indeed I don’t know what you mean.’—‘You do,’ said Hardy, with great indignation, and a violent struggle immediately commenced. The dog, now alarmed by the voices, began to bark outrageously. Tom was terrified lest the old man should come out to see what was the matter; his strength forsook him, and flinging the handkerchief and meat over the hedge, he ran away with all his speed. The handkerchief fell within the reach of the dog, who instantly snapped at it; luckily it did not come untied. Hardy saw a pitchfork on a dunghill close beside him, and seizing upon it stuck it into the handkerchief. The dog pulled, tore, growled, grappled, yelled; it was impossible to get the handkerchief from between his teeth; but the knot was loosed, the meat, unperceived by the dog, dropped out; and while he dragged off the handkerchief in triumph, Hardy with inexpressible joy plunged the pitchfork into the poisoned meat, and bore it away.

Never did hero retire with more satisfaction from a field of battle. Full of the pleasure of successful benevolence, Hardy tripped joyfully home, and vaulting over the window-sill, when the first object he beheld was Mr. Power, the usher, standing at the head of the stairs, with a candle in his hand.

‘Come up, whoever you are,’ said Mr. William Power, in a stern voice; ‘I thought I should find you out at last. Come up, whoever you are!’ Hardy obeyed without reply.—‘Hardy!’ exclaimed Mr. Power, starting back with astonishment; ‘is it you, Mr. Hardy?’ repeated he, holding the light to his face. ‘Why, Sir,’ said he in a sneering tone, ‘I’m sure, if Mr. Trucman was here, he wouldn’t believe his own eyes; but for my part, I saw

through you long since, I never liked saints for my share. Will you please to do me the favour, Sir, if it is not too much trouble, to empty your pockets.'—Hardy obeyed in silence. 'Hey day! meat! raw meat! what next?'—'That's all,' said Hardy, emptying his pockets inside out. 'This is *all*,' said Mr. Power, taking up the meat.—'Pray, Sir,' said Hardy eagerly, 'let that meat be burned, it is poisoned.'—'Poisoned!' cried Mr. William Power, letting it drop out of his fingers; 'you wretch!' looking at him with a menacing air, what is all this? Speak.' Hardy was silent. 'Why don't you speak!' cried he, shaking him by the shoulder impatiently. Still Hardy was silent. 'Down upon your knees this minute, and confess all, tell me where you've been, what you've been doing, and who are your accomplices, for I know there is a gang of you: so,' added he, pressing heavily upon Hardy's shoulder, 'down upon your knees this minute, and confess the whole, that's your only way now to get off yourself. If you hope for *my* pardon, I can tell you it's not to be had without asking for.'—'Sir,' said Hardy in a firm but respectful voice, 'I have no pardon to ask, I have nothing to confess, I am innocent; but if I were not I would never try to get off myself by betraying my companions.'—'Very well, Sir! very well! very fine! stick to it, stick to it, I advise you—and we shall see. And how will you look to-morrow, Mr. Innocent, when my uncle the Doctor comes home?'—'As I do now, Sir,' said Hardy, unmoved. His composure threw Mr. Power into a rage too great for utterance. 'Sir,' continued Hardy, 'ever since I have been at school, I never told a lie, and therefore, Sir, I hope you will believe me now. Upon my word and honour, Sir, I have done nothing wrong.'—'Nothing wrong? Better and better; what, when I caught you going out at night?'—'*That* to be sure was wrong,' said Hardy, recollecting himself; 'but except that—' 'Except that, Sir! I will except nothing. Come along with me, young gentleman, your time for pardon is past.' Saying these words, he pulled Hardy along a narrow passage to a small closet, set apart for desperate offenders, and usually known by the name of the *Black Hole*. 'There, Sir, take up your lodging there for to-night,' said he, pushing him in; 'to-morrow I'll know more, or I'll know why,' added he, double lock-

ing the door with a tremendous noise upon his prisoner, and locking also the door at the end of the passage, so that no one could have access to him. 'So now I think I have you safe!' said Mr. William Power to himself, stalking off with steps which made the whole gallery resound, and which made many a guilty heart tremble. The conversation which had passed between Hardy and Mr. Power at the head of the stairs had been anxiously listened to, but only a word or two here and there had been distinctly overheard.—The locking of the black hole door was a terrible sound—some knew not what it portended, and others knew *too well*; all assembled in the morning with faces of anxiety. Tarlton's and Loveit's were the most agitated. Tarlton for himself; Loveit for his friend, for himself, for every body. Every one of the party, and Tarlton at their head, surrounded him with reproaches; and considered him as the author of the evils which hung over them. 'How could you do so? and why did you say any thing to Hardy about it? when you had promised too! Oh what shall we all do! what a scrape you have brought us into! Loveit its all your fault!'—'*All my fault!*' repeated poor Loveit, with a sigh; 'well that is hard.'

'Goodness! there's the bell,' exclaimed a number of voices at once. 'Now for it!' They all stood in a half circle for morning prayers! they listened,—'Here he is coming! No—Yes—Here he is!' And Mr. William Power, with a gloomy brow, appeared and walked up to his place at the head of the room. They knelt down to prayers, and the moment they rose, Mr. William Power, laying his hand upon the table, cried, 'Stand still, gentlemen, if you please.' Every body stood stock still; he walked out of the circle; they guessed that he was gone for Hardy, and the whole room was in commotion. Each with eagerness asked each what none could answer,—'*Has he told?*'—'*What has he told?*'—'*Who has he told of?*' 'I hope he has not told of me?' cried they. 'I'll answer for it he has told of all of us,' said Tarlton. 'And I'll answer for it he has told of none of us,' answered Loveit, with a sigh. 'You don't think he's such a fool, when he can get himself off,' said Tarlton.

At this instant the prisoner was led in, and as he passed

through the circle, every eye was fixed upon him; his eye turned upon no one, not even upon Loveit, who pulled him by the coat as he passed—every one felt almost afraid to breathe.—‘Well, Sir,’ said Mr. Power, sitting down in Mr. Trueman’s elbow chair, and placing the prisoner opposite to him;—‘well, Sir, what have you to say to me this morning?’—‘Nothing, Sir,’ answered Hardy, in a decided yet modest manner; ‘nothing but what I said last night.’—‘Nothing more?’—‘Nothing more, Sir.’—‘But I have something more to say to you, Sir, then; and a great deal more, I promise you, before I have done with you; and then seizing him in a fury, he was just going to give him a severe flogging, when the school-room door opened, and Mr. Trueman appeared, followed by an old man whom Loveit immediately knew. He leaned upon his stick as he walked, and in his other hand carried a basket of apples. When they came within the circle, Mr. Trueman stopped short—‘Hardy!’ exclaimed he, with a voice of unfeigned surprise, whilst Mr. William Power stood with his hand suspended.—‘Aye, Hardy, Sir,’ repeated he. ‘I told him you’d not believe your own eyes.’—Mr. Trueman advanced with a slow step. ‘Now, Sir, give me leave,’ said the usher, eagerly drawing him aside and whispering. ‘So, Sir,’ said Mr. T. when the whisper was done, addressing himself to Hardy with a voice and manner, which, had he been guilty, must have pierced him to the heart, ‘I find I have been deceived in you—it is but three hours ago I that I told your uncle I never had a boy in my school in whom I placed so much confidence; but, after all this show of honour and integrity, the moment my back is turned, you are the first to set an example of disobedience to my orders. Why do I talk of disobeying my commands, you are a thief!’—‘I, Sir,’ exclaimed Hardy, no longer able to repress his feelings.—‘You, Sir,—you and some others,’ said Mr. Trueman, looking round the room with a penetrating glance—‘you and some others—’ ‘Aye, Sir,’ interrupted Mr. William Power, ‘get that out of him if you can—ask him.’—‘I will ask him nothing, I shall neither put his truth or his honour to the trial; truth and honour are not to be expected amongst thieves.’ ‘I am not a thief! I have never had any thing to do with thieves,’ cried Hardy m-

dignantly. 'Have not you robbed this old man? don't you know the taste of these apples?' said Mr. Trueman, taking one out of the basket. 'No, Sir, I do not; I never touched one of that old man's apples.'—'Never touched one of them! I suppose this is some vile equivocation; you have done worse, you have had the barbarity, the baseness, to attempt to poison his dog; the poisoned meat was found in your pocket last night.'—'The poisoned meat was found in my pocket, Sir! but I never attempted to poison the dog, I saved his life.'—'Lord bless him,' said the old man. 'Nonsense! cunning!' said Mr. Power. 'I hope you won't let him impose upon you so, Sir.' 'No, he cannot impose upon me, I have a proof he is little prepared for,' said Mr. Trueman, producing the blue handkerchief in which the meat had been wrapped.

Tarlton turned pale; Hardy's countenance never changed.—'Don't you know this handkerchief, Sir?'—'I do, Sir!'—'Is it not your's?'—'No, Sir.'—'Don't you know whose it is?' cried Mr. Power. Hardy was silent.

'Now, gentlemen,' said Mr. Trueman, 'I am not fond of punishing you; but when I do it, you know it is always in earnest. I will begin with the eldest of you; I will begin with Hardy, and flog you with my own hands till this handkerchief is owned.' 'I'm sure it's not mine;' 'and I'm sure it's none of mine;' burst from every mouth, whilst they looked at each other in dismay, for none but Hardy, Loveit, and Tarlton knew the secret.—'My cane!' said Mr. Trueman, and Power handed him the cane—Loveit groaned from the bottom of his heart—Tarlton leaned back against the wall with a black countenance—Hardy looked with a steady eye at the cane.

'But first,' said Mr. Trueman, laying down the cane, 'let us see; perhaps we may find out the owner of this handkerchief another way,' examining the corners; it was almost torn to pieces, but luckily the corner that was marked remained.

'J. T.!' cried Mr. Trueman. Every eye turned upon the guilty Tarlton, who, now, as pale as ashes and trembling in every limb, sunk down upon his knees, and in a whining voice begged for mercy. 'Upon my word and honour, Sir, I'll tell you all; I should never have

thought of stealing the apples if Loveit had not first told me of them; and it was Tom who first put the poisoning the dog into my head: it was he who carried the meat; *wasn't it?*” said he, appealing to Hardy, whose word he knew must be believed—‘Oh dear Sir!’ continued he, as Mr. Trueman began to move towards him, ‘do let me off—do pray let me off this time! I’m not the only one indeed, Sir! I hope you won’t make me an example for the rest—It’s very hard I’m to be flogged more than they!’—‘I’m not going to flog you.’—‘Thank you, Sir,’ said Tarlton, getting up and wiping his eyes. ‘You need not thank me,’ said Mr. Trueman. ‘Take your handkerchief—go out of this room—out of this house—let me never see you more.’

‘If I had any hopes of him,’ said Mr. Trueman, as he shut the door after him; ‘if I had any hopes of him, I would have punished him: but I have none—punishment is meant only to make people better; and those who have any hopes of themselves will know how to submit to it.’

At these words Loveit first, and immediately all the rest of the guilty party, stepped out of the ranks, confessed their fault, and declared themselves ready to bear any punishment their master thought proper.—‘Oh, they have been punished enough,’ said the old man; ‘forgive them, Sir.’

Hardy looked as if he wished to speak.

‘Not because you ask it,’ said Mr. Trueman, ‘though I should be glad to oblige you—it wouldn’t be just—but there (pointing to Hardy,) there is one who has merited a reward; the highest I can give him is the pardon of his companions.’

Hardy bowed, and his face glowed with pleasure, whilst every body present sympathized in his feelings—‘I am sure,’ thought Loveit, ‘this is a lesson I shall never forget.’

‘Gentlemen,’ said the old man with a faltering voice, ‘it was’nt for the sake of my apples that I spoke; and you, Sir,’ said he to Hardy, ‘I thank you for saving my dog. If you please, I’ll plant on that mount, opposite the window, a young apple tree, from my old one; I will water it, and take care of it with my own hands for your sake, as long as I am able.—And may God bless you! (laying his trembling hand on Hardy’s head) may God bless you—I’m sure God *will* bless all such boys as you are.’



## THE BIRTH-DAY PRESENT.



**M**AMMA,' said Rosamond, after a long silence, 'do you know, what I have been thinking of all this time?'

'No, my dear.—What?'

'Why, mamma, about my cousin Bell's birth-day; do you know what day it is?' 'No. I don't remember.'

'Dear mother! don't you remember it's the 22d of December; and her birth-day is the day after to-morrow?—Don't you recollect now? But you never remember about birth-days, mamma: that was just what I was thinking of, that you never remember my sister Laura's birth-day, or—or—or *mine*, mamma!'

'What do you mean, my dear? I remember your birth-day perfectly well.'

'Indeed! but you never *keep* it though.'

'What do you mean by keeping your birth-day?'

'Oh, mamma, you know very well—as Bell's birth-day is kept.—In the first place there is a great dinner.'

'And can Bell eat more upon her birth-day than upon any other day?'

‘No; nor I should not mind about the dinner, except the mince pies. But Bell has a great many nice things; I don’t mean nice eatable things, but nice new playthings given to her always on her birth-day; and every body drinks her health, and she’s so happy.’

‘But stay, Rosamond, how you jumble things together! Is it every body’s drinking her health, that makes her so happy; or the new playthings, or the nice mince pies? I can easily believe, that she is happy whilst she is eating a mince pie, or whilst she is playing; but how does every body’s drinking her health at dinner make her happy?’

Rosamond paused, and then said she did not know. ‘But,’ added she ‘the *nice new* playthings mother!’

‘But why the nice new playthings? Do you like them only because they are *new*?’

‘Not *only*—I do not like playthings *only* because they are new, but Bell *does* I believe—for that puts me in mind—Do you know, mother, she had a great drawer full of *old* playthings that she never used, and she said that they were good for nothing, because they were *old*; but I thought many of them were good for a great deal more than the new ones.—Now you shall be judge, mamma; I’ll tell you all that was in the drawer.’

‘Nay, Rosamond, thank you, not just now; I have not time to listen to you.’

‘Well then, mamma, the day after to-morrow I can show you the drawer: I want you to be judge very much, because I am sure I was in the right.—And, mother,’ added Rosamond, stopping her as she was going out of the room, ‘will you—not now, but when you’ve time—will you tell me why you never keep my birth day—why you never make any difference between that day and any other?’

‘And will you, Rosamond—not now, but when you have time to think about it—tell me why I should make any difference between your birth-day and any other day?’

Rosamond thought—but she could not find out any reason: besides, she suddenly recollected, that she had not time to think any longer, for there was a certain work-basket to be finished, which she was making for

her cousin Bell, as a present upon her birth-day. The work was at a stand for want of some filigree paper, and as her mother was going out, she asked her to take her with her, that she might buy some. Her sister Laura went with them.

‘Sister,’ said Rosamond, as they were walking along, ‘what have you done with your half-guinea?’

‘I have it in my pocket.’

‘Dear! you will keep it forever in your pocket: you know my godmother, when she gave it to you, said you would keep it longer than I should keep mine; and I know what she thought by her look at that time. I heard her say something to my mother.’

‘Yes,’ said Laura, smiling, ‘she whispered so loud, that I could not help hearing her too: she said I was a little miser.’

‘But did not you hear her say that I was very *generous*? and she’ll see that she was not mistaken. I hope she’ll be by when I give my basket to Bell—won’t it be beautiful?—there is to be wreath of myrtle, you know, round the handle, and a frost ground, and then the medallions——’

‘Stay,’ interrupted her sister; for Rosamond, anticipating the glories of her work-basket, talked and walked so fast, that she had passed, without perceiving it, the shop where the filigree paper was to be bought. They turned back. Now it happened, that the shop was the corner house of a street, and one of the windows looked out into a narrow lane: a coach full of ladies stopped at the door just before they went in, so that no one had time immediately to think of Rosamond and her filigree paper, and she went to the window, where she saw, that her sister Laura was looking earnestly at something that was passing in the lane.

Opposite to the window, at the door of a poor looking house, there was sitting a little girl weaving lace. Her bobbins moved as quick as lightning, and she never once looked up from her work.

‘Is not she very industrious?’ said Laura; ‘and very honest too,’ added she in a minute afterwards; for just then, a baker with a basket of rolls on his head passed, and by accident one of the rolls fell close to the little girl:

she took it up eagerly, looked at it as if she was very hungry, then put aside her work, and ran after the baker to return it to him.

Whilst she was gone, a footman in a livery laced with silver, who belonged to the coach that stood at the shop door, as he was lounging with one of his companions, chanced to spy the weaving pillow which she had left upon a stone before the door. To divert himself (for idle people do mischief often to divert themselves) he took up the pillow, and entangled all the bobbins. The little girl came back out of breath to her work; but what was her surprise and sorrow to find it spoiled: she twisted and untwisted, placed and replaced the bobbins, while the footman stood laughing at her distress. She got up gently, and was retiring into the house, when the silver-laced footman stopped her, saying insolently—‘sit still, child.’

‘I must go to my mother, Sir,’ said the child; ‘besides, you have spoiled all my lace—I can’t stay.’

‘Can’t you,’ said the brutal footman, snatching her weaving pillow again, ‘I’ll teach you to complain of me.’ And he broke off one after another, all the bobbins, put them into his pocket, rolled her weaving pillow down the dirty lane, then jumped up behind his mistress’s coach, and was out of sight in an instant.

‘Poor girl!’ exclaimed Rosamond, no longer able to restrain her indignation at this injustice: ‘Poor little girl!’

At this instant her mother said to Rosamond—‘Come now, my dear, if you want this filigree paper, buy it.’

‘Yes, madam,’ said Rosamond; and the idea of what her godmother and her cousin Bell would think of her generosity rushed again upon her imagination. All her feelings of pity were immediately suppressed. Satisfied with bestowing another exclamation upon the ‘*Poor little girl!*’ she went to spend her half-guinea upon her filigree basket. In the mean time, she that was called the ‘*little miser,*’ beckoned to the poor girl, and opening the window said, pointing to the cushion, ‘Is it quite spoiled?’

‘Quite! quite spoiled! and I can’t, nor mother neither,

buy another ; and I can't do any thing else for my bread.'  
— A few, but very few, tears fell as she said this.

'How much would another cost?' said Laura.

'Oh, a great—*great* deal.'

'More than that?' said Laura, holding up her half-guinea.

'Oh, no.'

'Then you can buy another with that,' said Laura, dropping the half-guinea into her hand, and she shut the window before the child could find words to thank her ; but not before she saw a look of joy and gratitude, which gave Laura more pleasure probably than all the praise, which could have been bestowed upon her generosity.

Late on the morning of her cousin's birth-day, Rosamond finished her work-basket. The carriage was at the door—Laura came running to call her ; her father's voice was heard at the same instant ; so she was obliged to go down with her basket but half wrapped up in silver paper, a circumstance at which she was a good deal disconcerted ; for the pleasure of surprising Bell would be utterly lost, if one bit of the filigree should peep out before the proper time. As the carriage went on, Rosamond pulled the paper to one side and to the other, and by each of the four corners.

'It will never do, my dear,' said her father, who had been watching her operations ; 'I am afraid you will never make a sheet of paper cover a box, which is twice as large as itself.'

'It is not a box, father,' said Rosamond, a little peevishly ; 'it's a basket.'

'Let us look at this basket,' said he, taking it out of her unwilling hands ; for she knew of what frail materials it was made, and she dreaded its coming to pieces under her father's examination.

He took hold of the handle rather roughly, and starting off the coach seat, she cried—

'Oh, Sir ! father ! Sir ! you will spoil it indeed !' said she with increased vehemence, when, after drawing aside the veil of silver paper, she saw him grasp the myrtle-wreathed handle.

'Indeed, Sir, you will spoil the poor handle.'

'But what is the use of *the poor handle*,' said her fa-

ther, 'if we are not to take hold of it? And pray, continued he, turning the basket round with his finger and thumb, rather in a disrespectful manner—'pray is this the thing you have been about all this week? I have seen you all this week dabbling with paste and rags; I could not conceive what you were about—Is this the thing?'

'Yes, Sir—You think then that I have wasted my time, because the basket is of no use: but then it is for a present for my cousin Bell.'

'Your cousin Bell will be very much obliged to you for a present that is of no use; you had better have given her the Purple jar.\*'

'Oh, father! I thought you had forgotten that—it was two years ago; I'm not so silly now. But Bell will like the basket, I know, though it is of no use.'

'Then you think Bell is sillier *now*, than you were two years ago.—Well, perhaps that is true; but how comes it, Rosamond, now that you are so wise, that you are fond of such a silly person?'

'I, father?' said Rosamond, hesitating; 'I don't think I am *very* fond of her.'

'I did not say *very* fond.'

'Well, but I don't think I am at all fond of her.'

'But you have spent a whole week in making this thing for her.'

'Yes, and all my half-guinea besides.'

'Yet you think her silly, and you are not fond of her at all; and you say you know this thing will be of no use to her.'

'But it is her birth-day, Sir; and I am sure she will *expect* something, and every body else will give her something.'

'Then your reason for giving is because she expects you to give her something. And will you, or can you, or should you always give, merely because others *expect*, or because somebody else gives?'

'Always!—no not always.'

'Oh, only on birth-days.'

Rosamond, laughing, 'Now you are making a joke of me, papa, I see; but I thought you liked that people should be generous—my godmother said that she did.'

\* See Easy Lessons; by the same author.

‘So do I, full as well as your godmother ; but we have not yet quite settled what it is to be generous.’

‘Why, is it not generous to make presents?’ said Rosamond.

‘That is a question, which it would take up a great deal of time to answer. But, for instance, to make a present of a thing, that you know can be of no use, to a person you neither love nor esteem, because it is her birth-day, and because every body gives her something, and because she expects something, and because your godmother says she likes that people should be generous, seems to me, my dear Rosamond, to be, since I must say it, rather more like folly than generosity.’

Rosamond looked down upon the basket, and was silent.

‘Then I am a fool! am I?’ said she, looking up at last.

‘Because you have made *one* mistake?—No. If you have sense enough to see your own mistakes, and can afterwards avoid them, you will never be a fool.’

Here the carriage stopped, and Rosamond recollected, that the basket was uncovered.

Now we must observe, that Rosamond’s father had not been too severe upon Bell, when he called her a silly girl. From her infancy she had been humoured ; and at eight years old she had the misfortune to be a spoiled child : she was idle, fretful, and selfish, so that nothing could make her happy. On her birth-day she expected, however, to be perfectly happy. Every body in the house tried to please her, and they succeeded so well, that between breakfast and dinner she had only six fits of crying. The cause of five of these fits no one could discover ; but the last, and most lamentable, was occasioned by a disappointment about a worked muslin frock, and accordingly at dressing time her maid brought it to her, exclaiming—‘see here miss! what your mamma has sent you on your birth-day—Here’s a frock fit for a queen—if it had but lace round the cuffs.’

‘And why has not it lace around the cuffs? mamma said it should.’

‘Yes, but mistress was disappointed about the lace ; it is not come home.’

‘Not come home, indeed! and did’nt they know it was my birth-day? But then I say I won’t wear it without

the lace—I can't wear it without the lace—and I won't.'

The lace, however, could not be had; and Bell at length submitted to let the frock be put on. 'Come, Miss Bell, dry your eyes,' said the maid who *educated* her; 'dry your eyes, and I'll tell you something that will please you.'

'What, then?' said the child, pouting and sobbing.

'Why—but you must not tell, that I told you.'

'No—but if I am asked?'

'Why, if you are asked, you must tell the truth to be sure.—So I'll hold my tongue, miss.'

'Nay, tell me though, and I'll never tell—if I *am* asked.'

'Well, then,' said the maid, 'your cousin Rosamond is come, and has brought you the most *beautifullest* thing you ever saw in your life; but you are not to know any thing about it till after dinner, because she wants to surprise you; and mistress has put it into her wardrobe till after dinner.'

'Till after dinner!' repeated Bell, impatiently; 'I can't wait till then, I must see it this minute.'

The maid refused her several times, till Bell burst into another fit of crying, and the maid fearing that her mistress would be angry with *her*, if Bell's eyes were red at dinner-time, consented to shew her the basket.

'How pretty!—But let me have it in my own hands,' said Bell, as the maid held the basket up out of her reach.

'Oh no, you must not touch it; for if you should spoil it, what would become of me?'

'Become of you indeed!' exclaimed the spoiled child, who never considered any thing but her own immediate gratification—'Become of *you*, indeed! what signifies that—I shan't spoil it; and I will have it in my own hands.—If you don't hold it down for me directly, I'll tell that you shewed it to me.'

'Then you won't snatch it?'

'No, no, I won't indeed,' said Bell; but she had learned from her maid a total disregard of truth.—She snatched the basket the moment it was within her reach; a struggle ensued, in which the handle and lid were torn off, and one of the medallions crushed inwards, before the little fury returned to her senses. Calmed at this sight, the next question was, how she should conceal the mis-



chief, which she had done. After many attempts, the handle and lid were replaced, the basket was put exactly in the same spot in which it had stood before, and the maid charged the child, ‘*to look as if nothing was the matter.*’

We hope that both children and parents will here pause for a moment to reflect.—The habits of tyranny, meanness, and falsehood, which children acquire from living with bad servants, are scarcely ever conquered in the whole course of their future lives.

After shutting up the basket they left the room, and in the adjoining passage they found a poor girl waiting with a small parcel in her hand.

‘What’s your business?’ said the maid.

‘I have brought home the lace, madam, that was bespoke for the young lady.’

‘Oh, you have, have you, at last?’ said Bell; ‘and pray why didn’t you bring it sooner?’

The girl was going to answer, but the maid interrupted her, saying—‘Come, come, none of your excuses; you are a little idle good for nothing thing, to disappoint Miss Bell upon her birth-day—But now you have brought it, let us look at it?’ The little girl gave the lace without reply, and the maid desired her to go about her business, and not to expect to be paid; for that her mistress could not see any body, *because* she was in a room full of company.

‘May I call again, madam, this afternoon?’ said the child, timidly.

‘Lord bless my stars!’ replied the maid, ‘what makes people so poor I *wonders!* I wish mistress would buy her lace at the warehouse as I told her, and not of these folks,—Call again! yes, to be sure—I believe you’d call, call, call twenty times for two-pence.’

However ungraciously the permission to call again was granted, it was received with gratitude: the little girl departed with a cheerful countenance: and Bell teased her maid till she got her to sew the long wished for lace upon her cuffs.

Unfortunate Bell!—All dinner time passed, and people were so hungry, so busy, or so stupid, that not an eye observed her favourite piece of finery. Till at length she

was no longer able to conceal her impatience, and turning to Laura, who sat next to her, she said—‘ You have no lace upon your cuffs ; look how beautiful mine is !—Is not it ? Don’t you wish your mamma could afford to give you some like it ?—But you can’t get any if she would, for this was made on purpose for me on my birth-day, and nobody can get a bit more any where, if they would give the world for it ?’

‘ But cannot the person who made it,’ said Laura, ‘ make any more like it ?’

‘ No, no, no !’ cried Bell ; for she had already learned, either from her maid or her mother, the mean pride, which values things not for being really pretty or useful, but for being such as nobody else can procure.

‘ Nobody can get any like it, I say,’ repeated Bell : ‘ Nobody in all London can make it but one person, and that person will never make a bit for any body but me, I am sure—mamma won’t let her, if I ask her not.’

‘ Very well,’ said Laura, coolly, ‘ I do not want any of it ; you need not be so violent : I assure you that I don’t want any of it.’

‘ Yes, but you do though,’ said Bell, more angrily.

‘ No, indeed,’ said Laura, smiling.

‘ You do in the bottom of your heart ; but you say you don’t to plague me, I know,’ cried Bell, swelling with disappointed vanity.—‘ It is pretty for all that, and it cost a great deal of money too, and nobody shall have any like it, if they cried their eyes out.’

Laura received this sentence in silence—Rosamond smiled. And at her smile the ill-suppressed rage of the spoiled child burst forth into the seventh and loudest fit of crying, which had been heard upon her birth-day.

‘ What’s the matter, my pet ?’ cried her mother ; ‘ Come to me, and tell me what’s the matter.’

Bell ran roaring to her mother ; but no otherwise explained the cause of her sorrow than by tearing the fine lace, with frantic gestures, from her cuffs, and throwing the fragments into her mother’s lap.

‘ Oh ! the lace, child !—are you mad ?’ said her mother, catching hold of both her hands. ‘ Your beautiful lace, my dear love—do you know how much it cost ?’

‘ I don’t care how much it cost—it is not beautiful, and

'I'll have none of it,' replied Bell, sobbing—'for it is not beautiful.'

'But it is beautiful,' retorted her mother; 'I chose the pattern myself. Who has put it into your head, child, to dislike it?—Was it Nancy?'

'No, not Nancy, but *them*, mamma,' said Bell, pointing to Laura and Rosamond.

'Oh fie! don't *point*,' said her mother, putting down her stubborn finger; nor say *them*, like Nancy; I am sure you misunderstood.—Miss Laura, I am sure, did not mean any such thing.'

'No, madam; and I did not say any such thing, that I recollect,' said Laura, gently.

'Oh no, indeed!' cried Rosamond, warmly rising in her sister's defence. But no defence or explanation was to be heard, for every body had now gathered round Bell, to dry her tears, and to comfort her for the mischief she had done to her own cuffs.

They succeeded so well, that in about a quarter of an hour the young lady's eyes, and the reddened arches over the eyebrows came to their natural colour; and the business being thus happily hushed up, the mother, as a reward to her daughter for her good humour, begged that Rosamond would now be so good as to produce her 'charming present.'

Rosamond, followed by all the company, amongst whom, to her great joy, was her godmother, proceeded to the dressing-room.

'Now I am sure,' thought she, 'Bell will be surprised, and my godmother will see she was right about my generosity.'

The doors of the wardrobe were opened with due ceremony, and the filigree basket appeared in all its glory.

'Well, this is a charming present indeed!' said the godmother, who was one of the company; '*My* Rosamond knows how to make presents.' And as she spoke she took hold of the basket, to lift it down to the admiring audience.—Scarcely had she touched it when, lo! the myrtle wreath, the medallions, all dropped—the basket fell to the ground, and only the handle remained in her hand.

All eyes were fixed upon the wreck. Exclamations of sorrow were heard in various tones; and 'Who can

have done this?' was all that Rosamond could say. Bell stood in sullen silence, which she obstinately preserved in the midst of the inquiries, which were made about the disaster. At length the servants were summoned, and amongst them Nancy, Miss Bell's maid and governess: she affected much surprise, when she saw what had befallen the basket, and declared that she knew nothing of the matter, but that she had seen her mistress in the morning put it quite safe into the wardrobe; and that, for her part, she had never touched it, or thought of touching it, in her born days—'Nor Miss Bell neither, ma'am, I can answer for her; for she never knew of its being there, because I never so much as mentioned it to her, that there was such a thing in the house, because I knew Miss Rosamond wanted to surprise her with the secret—so I never mentioned a sentence of it—Did I, Miss Bell?'

Bell putting on the deceitful look which her maid had taught her, answered boldly, *No*; but she had hold of Rosamond's hand, and at the instant she uttered this falsehood, she squeezed it terribly.

'Why do you squeeze my hand so?' said Rosamond, in a low voice; 'What are you afraid of?'

'Afraid of!' cried Bell, turning angrily; 'I'm not afraid of any thing—I've nothing to be afraid about.'

'Nay, I did not say you had,' whispered Rosamond; 'But only if you did by accident—You know what I mean—I should not be angry if you did—Only say so.'

'I say I did not!' cried Bell, furiously; 'Mamma!—Mamma!—Nancy! my cousin Rosamond won't believe me! that's very hard—It's very rude! and I won't bear it—I won't.'

'Don't be angry, love—don't;' said the maid.

'Nobody suspects you, darling;' said her mother.—'But she has too much sensibility.—Don't cry, love, nobody suspected you.'

'But you know,' continued she, turning to the maid, 'somebody must have done this, and I must know how it was done; Miss Rosamond's charming present must not be spoiled in this way, in my house, without my taking proper notice of it.—I assure you I am very angry about it, Rosamond.'

Rosamond did not rejoice in her anger, and had nearly

made a sad mistake, by speaking loud her thoughts—‘*I was very foolish*—’ she began and stopped.

‘Ma’am,’ cried the maid, suddenly, ‘I’ll venture to say I know who did it.’

‘Who!’ said every one eagerly.

‘Who?’ said Bell, trembling.

‘Why Miss, don’t you recollect that little girl with the lace, that we saw peeping about in the passage: I’m sure she must have done it, for here she was by herself half an hour or more, and not another creature has been in mistress’s dressing-room, to my certain knowledge, since morning. Those sort of people have so much curiosity, I’m sure she must have been meddling with it;’ added the maid.

‘Oh yes, that’s the thing,’ said the mistress, decidedly. —‘Well, Miss Rosamond, for your comfort, she shall never come into my house again.’

‘Oh, that would not comfort me at all,’ said Rosamond; ‘besides, we are not sure that she did it; and if—’ A single knock at the door was heard at this instant: it was the little girl, who came to be paid for her lace.

‘Call her in,’ said the lady of the house; ‘let us see her directly.’

The maid, who was afraid that the girl’s innocence would appear if she were produced, hesitated; but upon her mistress’s repeating her commands, she was forced to obey.

The child came in with a look of simplicity; but when she saw the room full of company she was a little abashed. Rosamond and Laura looked at her, and at one another with surprise; for it was the same little girl whom they had seen weaving lace.

‘Is it not she?’ whispered Rosamond to her sister.

‘Yes it is; but hush,’ said Laura, ‘she does not know us.—Don’t say a word, let us hear what she will say.’ Laura got behind the rest of the company as she spoke, so that the little girl could not see her.

‘Vastly well!’ said Bell’s mother; ‘I am waiting to see how long you will have the assurance to stand there with that innocent look. Did you ever see that basket before?’

‘Yes, ma’am;’ said the girl.

‘*Yes ma’am,*’ cried the maid, ‘and what else do you know about it?—You had better confess it at once, and mistress perhaps will say no more about it.’

‘Yes, do confess it ;’ added Bell, earnestly.

‘Confess what, madam?’ said the little girl; ‘I never touched the basket, madam.’

‘You never *touched* it; but you confess,’ interrupted Bell’s mother, ‘that you *did see* it before.—And pray how came you to see it? you must have opened my wardrobe.’

‘No indeed, ma’am,’ said the little girl; ‘but I was waiting in the passage, ma’am, and this door was partly open; and, looking at the maid, you know, I could not help seeing it.’

‘Why, how could you see it through the doors of my wardrobe?’ rejoined the lady.

The maid frightened, pulled the little girl by the sleeve.

‘Answer me,’ said the lady, ‘where did you see this basket?’

Another stronger pull.

‘I saw it, madam, in her hands,’ looking at the maid; ‘and——’

‘Well, and what became of it afterwards?’

‘Ma’am,’ hesitating, ‘Miss pulled, and by accident——I believe, I saw, ma’am——Miss, you know what I saw.’

‘I do not know——I do not know: and if I did you had no business there——and mamma won’t believe you, I am sure.’

But every body else did, and their eyes were fixed upon Bell in a manner which made her feel rather ashamed.

‘What do you all look at me so for?—Why do you all look so?—And am I to be shamed upon my birthday?’ cried she, bursting into a roar of passion; ‘and all for this nasty thing!’ added she, pushing away the remains of the basket, and looking angrily at Rosamond.

‘Bell! Bell! Oh fie! fie! now I *am* ashamed of you—that’s quite rude to your cousin,’ said her mother, who was more shocked at her daughter’s want of politeness than at her falsehood. ‘Take her away, Nancy, till she has done crying;’ added she to the maid, who accordingly carried off her pupil.

Rosamond, during this scene, especially at the moment when her present was pushed away with such disdain, had been making reflections upon the nature of true generosity. A smile from her father, who stood by, a silent spectator of the catastrophe of the filigree basket, gave rise to these reflections; nor were they entirely dissipated by the condolence of the rest of the company, nor even by the praises of her godmother, who to condole her said—'Well, my dear Rosamond, I admire your generous spirit. You know I prophesied that your half-guinea would be gone the soonest—Did I not, Laura?' said she, appealing in a sarcastic tone to where she thought Laura was.—'Where is Laura? I don't see her.'

Laura came forward.

'You are too *prudent* to throw away your money like your sister; your half-guinea, I'll answer for it, is snug in your pocket—Is it not?'

'No, madam;' answered she in a low voice. But low as the voice was, the poor little lace-girl heard it; and now, for the first time, fixing her eyes upon Laura, recollected her benefactress.

'Oh, that's the young lady!' she exclaimed, in a tone of joyful gratitude—'The good!—good young lady, who gave me the half-guinea, and would not stay to be thanked for it—but I *will* thank her now.'

'The half-guinea, Laura!' said her godmother—'What is all this?'

'I'll tell you, madam, if you please,' said the little girl.

It was not in expectation of being praised for it, that Laura had been generous, and therefore every body was really touched with the history of the weaving pillow; and whilst they praised, felt a certain degree of respect, which is not always felt by those who pour forth eulogiums. *Respect* is not an improper word, even applied to a child of Laura's age; for let the age or situation of the person be what it may, they command respect who deserve it.

'Ah, madam!' said Rosamond to her godmother, 'now you see—you see she is *not* a little miser: I'm sure that's better than wasting half-a-guinea upon a filigree basket—Is it not, ma'am?' said she, with an eagerness which shewed that he had forgotten all her own misfor-

tunes in sympathy with her sister.—‘ This is being *really generous*, father, is it not ?’

‘ Yes, Rosamond,’ said her father, and he kissed her—‘ this *is* being really generous. It is not only by giving away money that we can shew generosity ; it is by giving up to others any thing that we like ourselves : and therefore, added he, smiling, it is really generous of you to give your sister the thing you like best of all others.’

‘ The thing I like the best of all others, father,’ said Rosamond, half pleased, half vexed ; ‘ what is that I wonder ?—You don’t mean *fraise*, do you, Sir ?’

‘ Nay, you must decide that, Rosamond.’

‘ Why, Sir,’ said she, ingenuously, ‘ perhaps it *was* ONCE the thing I liked best ; but the pleasure I have just felt, makes me like something else better.’



# SIMPLE SUSAN.



## CHAPTER I.

‘ Waked, as her custom was, before the day,  
‘ To do the observance due to sprightly May.’

DRYDEN.

**I**N a retired hamlet on the borders of Wales, between Oswestry and Shrewsbury, it is still the custom to celebrate the first of May.—The children of the village who look forward to this rural festival with joyful eagerness, usually meet on the last day of April to make up their nosegays for the morning, and to choose their queen.—Their customary place of meeting is at a hawthorn, which stands in a little green nook, open on one side to a shady lane, and separated on the other side by a thick sweet briar and hawthorn hedge from the garden of an attorney.

This attorney began the world with—nothing—but he contrived to scrape together a good deal of money, every

body knew how. He built a new house at the entrance of the village, and had a large, well-fenced garden; yet, notwithstanding his fences, he never felt himself secure; such were his litigious habits, and his suspicious temper, that he was constantly at variance with his simple and peaceable neighbours.—Some pig, or dog, or goat, or goose, was for ever trespassing:—his complaints and his extortions wearied and alarmed the whole hamlet.—The paths in his fields were at length unfrequented,—his stiles were blocked up with stones or stuffed with brambles and briars, so that not a gosling could creep under, or a gñant get over them—and so careful were even the village children of giving offence to this irritable man of the law, that they would not venture to fly a kite near his fields, lest it should entangle in his trees, or fall upon his meadow.

Mr. Case, for this was the name of our attorney, had a son and a daughter, to whose education he had not time to attend, as his whole soul was intent upon accumulating for them a fortune.—For several years he suffered his children to run wild in the village, but suddenly, upon his being appointed to a considerable agency, he began to think of making his children I little genteel. He sent his son to learn Latin; he hired a maid to wait upon his daughter Barbara, and he strictly forbade her *thenceforward* to keep company with any of the poor children, who had hitherto been her playfellows:—they were not sorry for this prohibition, because she had been their tyrant rather than their companion: she was vexed to observe, that her absence was not regretted, and she was mortified to perceive, that she could not humble them by any display of airs and finery.

There was one poor girl amongst her former associates, to whom she had a peculiar dislike—Susan Price—a sweet-tempered, modest, sprightly, industrious lass, who was the pride and delight of the village.—Her father rented a small farm, and unfortunately for him, he lived near—attorney Case.—Barbara used often to sit at her window watching Susan at work—sometimes she saw her in the neat garden raking the beds or weeding the borders; sometimes she was kneeling at her beehive with fresh flowers for her bees—sometimes she was in

the poultry-yard scattering corn from her sive amongst the eager chickens; and in the evening she was often seated in a little honey-suckle arbour, with a clean, light, three-legged deal table before her, upon which she put her plain-work.—Susan had been taught to work neatly by her good mother, who was very fond of her, and to whom she was most gratefully attached.—Mrs. Price was an intelligent, active, domestic woman, but her health was not robust; she earned money, however, by taking in plainwork, and she was famous for baking excellent bread and breakfast cakes. She was respected in the village for her conduct as a wife and as a mother, and all were eager to shew her attention.—At her door the first branch of hawthorn was always placed on May-morning, and her Susan was usually Queen of the May.

It was now time to choose the Queen.—The setting sun shone full upon the pink blossoms of the hawthorn, when the merry group assembled upon their little green.—Barbara was now walking in sullen state in her father's garden; she heard the busy voices in the lane, and she concealed herself behind the high hedge, that she might listen to their conversation.

'Where's Susan?'—were the first unwelcome words which she overheard.—'Aye, where's Susan,' repeated Philip stopping short in the middle of a new tune, that he was playing on his pipe,—'I wish Susan would come! I want her to sing me this same tune over again, I have not it yet.'

'And I wish Susan would come, I'm sure,' cried a little girl, whose lap was full of primroses—'Susan will give me some thread to tie up my nosegays, and she'll shew me where the fresh violets grow, and she has promised to give me a great bunch of her double cow-slips to wear to-morrow.—I wish she would come.'

'Nothing can be done without Susan!—She always shews us where the nicest flowers are to be found in the lanes and meadows,' said they.—'She must make up the garlands—and she shall be Queen of the May!' exclaimed a multitude of little voices.

'But she does not come!' said Philip.

Rose, who was her particular friend, now came forward, to assure the impatient assembly, 'that she would

answer for it Susan would come as soon as she possibly could, and that she probably was detained by business at home.'—The little electors thought, that all business should give way to theirs, and Rose was dispatched to summon her friend immediately.

'Tell her to make haste,' cried Philip—'Attorney Case dined at the Abbey to-day—luckily for us; if he comes home, and finds us here, may be he'll drive us away, for he says this bit of ground belongs to his garden, though that is not true, I'm sure, for Farmer Price knows, and says, it was always open to the road.—The attorney wants to get our play ground, so he does—I wish he and his daughter Bab, or Miss Barbara, as she must now be called, were a hundred miles off, out of our way, I know.—No later than yesterday she threw down my nine-pins in one of her ill humours, as she was walking by with her gown, all trailing in the dust.'

'Yes,' cried Mary, the little primrose girl, 'her gown is always trailing, she does not hold it up nicely, like Susan; and with all her fine clothes she never looks half so neat.—Mamma says she wishes I may be like Susan, when I grow up to be a great girl, and so do I.—I should not like to look conceited as Barbara does, if I was ever so rich.'

'Rich or poor,' said Philip, 'it does not become a girl to look conceited, much less *bold*, as Barbara did the other day, when she was standing at her father's door, without a hat upon her head, staring at the strange gentleman who stopped hereabout to let his horse drink.—I know what he thought of Bab by his looks, and of Susan too—for Susan was in her garden, bending down a branch of the laburnum tree, looking at its yellow flowers, which were just come out; and when the gentleman asked her how many miles it was from Shrewsbury, she answered him so modest!—not bashful like as if she had never seen nobody before—but just right—and then she pulled on her straw hat; which was fallen back with her looking up at the laburnum, and she went her ways home, and the gentleman says to me, after she was gone, 'Pray, who is that neat modest girl?'

'But I wish Susan would come,' cried Philip, interrupting himself.

Susan was all this time, as her friend Rose rightly guessed, busy at home.—She was detained by her father's returning later than usual—his supper was ready for him nearly an hour before he came home, and Susan swept up the ashes twice, and twice put on wood to make a cheerful blaze for him ; but at last, when he did come in, he took no notice of the blaze or of Susan, and when his wife asked him how he did, he made no answer, but stood with his back to the fire, looking very gloomy.—Susan put his supper upon the table, and set his own chair for him, but he pushed away the chair and turned from the table, saying—

‘ I shall eat nothing, child ! why have you such a fire, to roast me at this time of the year ? ’

‘ You said yesterday, father, I thought, that you liked a little cheerful wood fire in the evening, and there was a great shower of hail ; your coat is quite wet, we must dry it.’

‘ Take it then, child,’ said he, pulling it off—‘ I shall soon have no coat to dry—and take my hat too,’ said he, throwing it upon the ground.

Susan hung up his hat, put his coat over the back of a chair to dry, and then stood anxiously looking at her mother, who was not well ; she had this day fatigued herself with baking, and now alarmed by her husband's moody behaviour, she sat down pale and trembling.—He threw himself into a chair, folded his arms, and fixed his eyes upon the fire—Susan was the first who ventured to break silence. Happy the father who has such a daughter as Susan!—her unaltered sweetness of temper, and her playful affectionate caresses, at last somewhat dissipated her father's melancholy :—he could not be prevailed upon to eat any of the supper which had been prepared for him ; however, with a faint smile, he told Susan, that he thought he could eat one of her Guinea hen's eggs.—She thanked him, and with that nimble alacrity, which marks the desire to please, she ran to her neat kitchen yard—but, alas ! her Guinea hen was not there !—it had strayed into the attorney's garden—she saw it through the paling, and timidly opening the little gate, she asked Miss Barbara, who was walking slowly by, to let her come in and take her Guinea hen.—Barbara, who was at this in-

stant reflecting with no agreeable feelings, upon the conversation of the village children, to which she had recently listened, started when she heard Susan's voice, and with a proud, ill-humoured look and voice refused her request.—'Shut the gate,' said she, 'you have no business in *our* garden, and as for your hen, I shall keep it, it is always flying in here, and plaguing us, and my father says it is a trespasser, and he told me I might catch it, and keep it the next time it got in, and it is in now.' Then Barbara called to her maid Betty, and bid her catch the mischievous hen.

'Oh my Guinea hen! my pretty Guinea hen,' cried Susan, as they hunted the frightened, screaming creature from corner to corner.

'Here we have got it!' said Betty, holding it fast by the legs.

'Now pay damages, Queen Susan, or goodbye to your pretty Guinea hen!' said Barbara, in an insulting tone.

'Damages! what damages?' said Susan, 'tell me what I must pay.'

'A shilling,' said Barbara.

'Oh if sixpence would do!' said Susan, 'I have but sixpence of my own in the world, and here it is.'

'It won't do,' said Barbara, turning her back.

'Nay, but hear me,' cried Susan, 'let me at least come in to look for its eggs. I only want *one* for my father's supper; you shall have all the rest.'

'What's your father or his supper to us; is he so nice that he can eat none but Guinea hens' eggs?' said Barbara: 'if you want your hen and your eggs, pay for them and you'll have them.'

'I have but sixpence, and you say that won't do,' said Susan with a sigh, as she looked at her favourite, which was in the maid's grasping hands, struggling and screaming in vain.

Susan retired disconsolate.—At the door of her father's cottage, she saw her friend Rose, who was just come to summon her to the hawthorn bush.

'They are all at the hawthorn, and I'm come for you, we can do nothing without *you*, dear Susan,' cried Rose, running to meet her, at the moment she saw her; 'you are chosen Queen of the May—come, make haste; but what's the matter, why do you look so sad?'

‘ Ah !’ said Susan ‘ don’t wait for me, I can’t come to you ; but,’ added she, pointing to the tuft of double cow-slips in the garden, ‘ gather those for poor little Mary, I promised them to her ; and tell her the violets are under the hedge just opposite the turnstile, on the right as we go to church. Goodbye, never mind me—I can’t come—I can’t stay, for my father wants me.’

‘ But don’t turn away your face, I won’t keep you a moment, only tell me what’s the matter,’ said her friend, following her into the cottage.

‘ Oh, nothing, not much,’ said Susan ; ‘ only that I wanted the egg in a great hurry for father, it would not have vexed me—to be sure I should then have clipped my Guinea hen’s wings, and then she could not have flown over the hedge—but let us think no more about it now,’ added she, twinkling away a tear.

When Rose, however, learnt that her friend’s Guinea hen was detained prisoner by the attorney’s daughter, she exclaimed with all the honest warmth of indignation, and instantly ran back to tell the story to her companions.

‘ Barbara ! aye ! like father, like daughter,’ cried Farmer Price, starting from the thoughtful attitude in which he had been fixed, and drawing his chair closer to his wife.

‘ You see something is amiss with me, wife—I’ll tell you what it is.’ As he lowered his voice, Susan, who was not sure that he wished she should hear what he was going to say, retired from behind his chair.—‘ Susan don’t go ; sit you down here, my sweet Susan,’ said he, making room for her upon his chair ; ‘ I believe I was a little cross when I came in first to-night, but I had something to vex me, as you shall hear.’

‘ About a fortnight ago, you know, wife,’ continued he, ‘ there was a balloting in our town for the militia, now at that time I wanted but ten days of forty years of age, and the attorney told me, I was a fool for not calling myself plump forty ; but the truth is the truth, and it is what I think fittest to be spoken at all times, come what will of it—so I was drawn for a militia-man, but when I thought how loth you and I would be to part, I was main glad to hear that I could get off by paying eight or nine

guineas for a substitute, only I had not the nine guineas, for you know we had bad luck with our sheep this year, and they died away one after another; but that was no excuse, so I went to Attorney Case, and with a power of difficulty, I got him to lend me the money, for which, to be sure, I gave him something, and left my lease of our farm with him, as he insisted upon it, by way of security for the loan. Attorney Case is too many for me; he has found what he calls a *flaw* in my lease, and the lease he tells me is not worth a farthing, and that he can turn us all out of our farm to-morrow if he pleases; and sure enough he will please, for I have thwarted him this day, and he swears he'll be revenged of me; indeed he has begun with me badly enough already.—I'm not come to the worst part of my story yet——'

Here Farmer Price made a dead stop, and his wife and Susan looked up in his face breathless with anxiety.

'It must come out,' said he with a short sigh; 'I must leave you in three days wife.'

'Must you!' said his wife in a faint resigned voice, 'Susan, love, open the window.'

Susan ran to open the window, and then returned to support her mother's head.

When she came a little to herself, she sat up, begged that her husband would go on, and that nothing might be concealed from her.

Her husband had no wish indeed to conceal any thing from a wife he loved so well, but stout as he was, and steady to his maxim, that the truth was the thing the fittest to be spoken at all times, his voice faltered, and it was with some difficulty, that he brought himself to speak the whole truth at this moment.

The fact was this: Case met Farmer Price as he was coming home whistling, from a new ploughed field; the Attorney had just dined at *the Abbey*—the Abbey was the family seat of an opulent Baronet in the neighbourhood, to whom Mr. Case had been agent; the Baronet died suddenly, and his estate and title devolved to a younger brother, who has now just arrived in the country, and to whom Mr. Case was eager to pay his court, in hopes of obtaining his favour. Of the agency he flattered himself that he was pretty secure, and he thought that he might



assume the tone of command towards the tenants, especially towards one who was some guineas in debt, and in whose lease there was a flaw.

Accosting the Farmer in a haughty manner, the Attorney began with, 'So, Farmer Price, a word with you, if you please, walk on here, man, beside my horse, and you'll hear me.—You have changed your opinion, I hope, about that bit of land, that corner at the end of my garden.'

'As how, Mr. Case?' said the farmer.

'As how, man—why you said something about its not belonging to me, when you heard me talk of enclosing it the other day.'

'So I did,' said Price, 'and so I do.'

Provoked and astonished at the firm tone in which these words were pronounced, the Attorney was upon the point of swearing, that he would have his revenge; but as his passions were habitually attentive to the *letter* of the law, he refrained from any hasty expression, which might, he was aware, in a court of justice, be hereafter brought against him.

'My good friend, Mr. Price,' said he, in a soft voice, and pale with suppressed rage—he forced a smile—'I'm under the necessity of calling in the money I lent you some time ago, and you will please to take notice, that it must be paid to morrow morning. I wish you a good evening. You have the money ready for me, I dare say.'

'No,' said the Farmer, 'not a guinea of it; but John Simpson, who was my substitute, has not left our village yet, I'll get the money back from him, and go myself, if so be it must be so, into the militia—so I will.'

The Attorney did not expect such a determination, and he represented in a friendly hypocritical tone to Price, 'that he had no wish to drive him to such an extremity, that it would be the height of folly in him *to run his head against a wall for no purpose*. You don't mean to take the corner into your own garden, do you, Price?' said he.

'I,' said the Farmer, 'God forbid! it's none of mine, I never take what does not belong to me.'

'True, right, very proper, of course,' said Mr. Case; 'but then you have no interest in life in the land in question?'

‘None.’

‘Then why so stiff about it, Price; all I want of you is to say——’

‘To say that black is white, which I won’t do, Mr. Case; the ground is a thing not worth talking of, but it’s neither yours nor mine; in my memory, since the *new* lane was made, it has always been open to the parish, and no man shall enclose it with my good will.—Truth is truth, and must be spoken; justice is justice, and should be done, Mr. Attorney.’

‘And law is law, Mr. Farmer, and shall have its course to your cost,’ cried the Attorney, exasperated by the dauntless spirit of this village Hampden.

Here they parted.—The glow of enthusiasm, the pride of virtue which made our hero brave, could not render him insensible. As he drew nearer home many melancholy thoughts pressed upon his heart, he passed the door of his own cottage with resolute steps, however, and went through the village in search of the man who had engaged to be his substitute. He found him, told him how the matter stood, and luckily the man, who had not yet spent the money, was willing to return it, as there were many others had been drawn for the militia, who, he observed, would be glad to give him the same price, or more, for his services.

The moment Price got the money, he hastened to Mr. Case’s house, walked straight forward into his room, and laying the money down upon his desk, ‘There, Mr. Attorney, are your nine guineas, count them, now I have done with you.’

‘Not yet,’ said the Attorney, jingling the money triumphantly in his hand; ‘we’ll give you a taste of the law, my good Sir, or I’m mistaken.—You forgot the flaw in your lease, which I have safe in this desk.’

‘Ah, my lease,’ said the Farmer, who had almost forgot to ask for it till he was thus put in mind of it by the attorney’s imprudent threat.

‘Give me my lease, Mr. Case; I’ve paid my money, you have no right to keep the lease any longer, whether it is a bad one or a good one.’

‘Pardon me,’ said the attorney, locking his desk, and putting the key into his pocket,——‘possession, my honest friend,’ cried he, striking his hand upon the desk,

‘possession is nine points of the law. Good night to you. I cannot in conscience return a lease to a tenant in which I know there is a capital flaw; it is my duty to shew it to my employer, or, in other words, to your new landlord, whose agent I have good reasons to expect I shall be. You will live to repent your obstinacy, Mr. Price. Your servant, Sir.’

Price retired melancholy, but not intimidated.

Many a man returns home with a gloomy countenance, who has not quite so much cause for vexation.

When Susan heard her father’s story, she quite forgot her Guinea hen, and her whole soul was intent upon her poor mother, who, notwithstanding her utmost exertion, could not support herself under this sudden stroke of misfortune.—In the middle of the night Susan was called up; her mother’s fever ran high for some hours, but towards morning it abated, and she fell into a soft sleep, with Susan’s hand locked fast in hers.

Susan sat motionless, and breathed softly, lest she should disturb her. The rush-light which stood beside the bed, was now burnt low, the long shadow of the tall wicker chair flitted, faded, appeared and vanished, as the flame rose and sunk in the socket. Susan was afraid, that the disagreeable smell might waken her mother, and gently disengaging her hand, she went on tip-toe to extinguish the candle—all was silent, the grey light of the morning was now spreading over every object; the sun rose slowly, and Susan stood at the lattice window, looking through the small leaded cross-barred panes at the splendid spectacle. A few birds began to chirp, but as Susan was listening to them her mother started in her sleep, and spoke unintelligibly.—Susan hung up a white apron before the window to keep out the light, and just then she heard the sound of music at a distance in the village. As it approached nearer, she knew that it was Philip playing upon his pipe and tabor; she distinguished the merry voices of her companions ‘caroling in honour of the May,’ and soon she saw them coming towards her father’s cottage, with branches and garlands in their hands. She opened quick, but gently, the latch of the door, and ran out to meet them.

‘Here she is!—Here’s Susan!’ they exclaimed joy-

fully, 'Here's the Queen of the May. And here's her crown!' cried Rose, pressing forward; but Susan put her finger upon her lips, and pointed to her mother's window—Philip's pipe stopped instantly.

'Thank you,' said Susan, 'my mother is ill, I can't leave her, you know.' Then gently putting aside the crown, her companions bid her say who should wear it for her.

'Will you, dear Rose?' said she, placing the garland upon her friend's head—'It's a charming May morning,' added she, with a smile; 'goodbye. We shan't hear your voices or the pipe when you have turned the corner into the village, so you need only stop till then, Philip.'

'I shall stop for all day,' said Philip, 'I've no mind to play any more.'

'Goodbye, poor Susan; it is a pity you can't come with us,' said all the children, and little Mary ran after Susan to the cottage door.

'I forgot to thank you,' said she, 'for the double cowslips; look how pretty they are, and smell how sweet the violets are in my bosom, and kiss me quick, for I shall be left behind.'

Susan kissed the little breathless girl, and returned softly to the side of her mother's bed.

'How grateful that child is to me for a cowslip only! How can I be grateful enough to such a mother as this?' said Susan to herself, as she bent over her sleeping mother's pale countenance.

Her mother's unfinished knitting lay upon a table near the bed, and Susan sat down in her wicker arm chair, and went on with the row, in the middle of which her hand stopped the preceding evening.

'She taught me to knit, she taught me every thing that I know,' thought Susan, 'and best of all, she taught me to love her, to wish to be like her.'

Her mother, when she awakened, felt much refreshed by her tranquil sleep, and observing that it was a delightful morning, said, 'that she had been dreaming she heard music, but that the drum frightened her, because she thought it was the signal for her husband to be carried away by a whole regiment of soldiers, who had pointed

their bayonets at him. But that was but a dream, Susan; I wakened, and knew it was a dream, and I then fell asleep, and have slept soundly ever since.'

How painful it is to waken to the remembrance of misfortune.—Gradually as this poor woman collected her scattered thoughts, she recalled the circumstances of the preceding evening; she was too certain, that she had heard from her husband's own lips the words, *I must leave you in three days*, and she wished that she could sleep again, and think it all a dream.

'But he'll want, he'll want a hundred things,' said she, starting up; 'I must get his linen ready for him. I'm afraid it's very late; Susan, why did you let me lie so long?'

'Every thing shall be ready, dear mother, only don't hurry yourself,' said Susan.

And indeed her mother was ill able to bear any hurry, or to do any work this day.

Susan's affectionate, dexterous, sensible activity was never more wanted, or more effectual. She understood so readily, she obeyed so exactly, and when she was left to her own discretion, judged so prudently, that her mother had little trouble and no anxiety in directing her; she said that Susan never did too little, or too much.

Susan was mending her father's linen, when Rose tapped softly at the window, and beckoned to her to come out; she went out.

'How does your mother do, in the first place?' said Rose.

'Better, thank you.'

'That's well, and I have a little bit of good news for you besides—here,' said she, pulling out a glove, in which there was money, 'we'll get the Guinea hen back again—we have all agreed about it. This is the money that has been given to us in the village this May morning; at every door they gave silver—see how generous they have been, twelve shillings I assure you. Now we are a match for Miss Barbara. You won't like to leave home—I'll go to Barbara, and you shall see your Guinea hen in ten minutes.'

Rose hurried away, pleased with her commission, and eager to accomplish her business.

Miss Barbara's maid Betty was the first person that was visible at the attorney's house.

Rose insisted upon seeing Miss Barbara herself, and she was shewn into the parlour to the young lady, who was reading a dirty novel, which she put under a heap of law papers as they entered.

'Dear, how you *startled* me! is it only you?' said she to her maid, but as soon as she saw Rose behind the maid she put on a scornful air.

'Could not ye say I was not at home, Betty.—Well, my good girl, what brings you here? something to borrow or beg, I suppose.'

May every ambassador—every ambassador in as good a cause, answer with as much dignity and moderation as Rose replied to Barbara upon the present occasion.

She assured her, that the person from whom she came did not send her either to beg or borrow, that she was able to pay the full value of that for which she came to ask; and producing her well-filled purse, 'I believe that this is a very good shilling,' said she, 'If you don't like it I will change it; and now you will be so good as to give me Susan's Guinea hen; it is in her name I ask for it.'

'No matter in whose name you ask for it,' replied Barbara, 'you will not have it—take up your shilling if you please.—I would have taken a shilling yesterday, if it had been paid at the time properly; but I told Susan, that if it was not paid then I should keep the hen, and so I shall I promise her.—You may go back and tell her so.'

The attorney's daughter had, whilst Rose opened her negotiation, measured the depth of her purse with a keen eye, and her penetration discovered that it contained at least ten shillings; with proper management she had some hopes that the Guinea hen might be made to bring in at least half the money.

Rose, who was of a warm temper, not quite so fit a match as she had thought herself for the wily Barbara, incautiously exclaimed, 'Whatever it costs us we are determined to have Susan's favourite hen; so if one shilling won't do, take two, and if two won't do, why take three.'

The shillings sounded provokingly upon the table, as

she threw them down one after another, and Barbara coolly replied, 'Three won't do.'

'Have you no conscience, Miss Barbara? then take four.'

Barbara shook her head. A fifth shilling was instantly proffered—but Bab, who now saw plainly that she had the game in her own hands, preserved a cold cruel silence.

Rose went on rapidly, bidding shilling after shilling, till she had completely emptied her purse.

The twelve shillings were spread upon the table—Barbara's avarice was moved, she consented for this ransom to liberate her prisoner.

Rose pushed the money towards her, but just then recollecting that she was acting for others more than for herself, and doubting whether she had full powers to conclude such an extravagant bargain, she gathered up the public treasure, and with newly-recovered prudence observed, that she must go back to consult her friends.

Her generous little friends were amazed at Barbara's meanness, but with one accord declared, that they were most willing, for their parts, to give up every farthing of the money. They all went to Susan in a body, and told her so.

'There's our purse,' said they, 'do what you please with it.'

They would not wait for one word of thanks, but ran away, leaving only Rose with her to settle the treaty for the Guinea hen.

There is a certain manner of accepting a favour, which shews true generosity of mind. Many know how to give, but few know how to accept a gift properly.

Susan was touched, but not astonished, by the kindness of her young friends, and she received the purse with as much simplicity as she would have given it.

'Well,' said Rose, 'shall I go back for the Guinea hen?'

'The Guinea hen!' said Susan, starting from a reverie into which she had fallen as she contemplated the purse, 'Certainly I *do* long to see my pretty Guinea hen once more, but I was not thinking of her just then—I was thinking of my father.'

Now Susan had heard her mother often in the course

of this day, wish, that she had but money enough in the world to pay John Simpson for going to serve in the militia instead of her husband. 'This to be sure will go but a little way,' thought Susan, 'but still it may be of some use to my father.' She told her mind to Rose, and concluded by saying decidedly, that 'if the money was given to her to dispose of as she pleased, she would give it to her father.'

'It is all yours, my dear good Susan,' cried Rose, with a look of warm approbation; 'this is so like you!—But I'm sorry that Miss Bab must keep your Guinea hen. I would not be her for all the Guinea hens, or guineas either, in the whole world. Why I'll answer for it, the Guinea hen won't make her happy, and you'll be happy *even* without—because you are good.—Let me come and help you to-morrow,' continued she, looking at Susan's work. 'If you have any more mending work to do—I never liked work till I worked with you—I won't forget my thimble or my scissors,' added she, laughing,—'though I used to forget them when I was a giddy girl. I assure you I am a great hand at my needle now—try me.'

Susan assured her friend that she did not doubt the powers of her needle, and that she would most willingly accept of her services, but that, *unluckily*, she had finished all the needle-work that was immediately wanted.

'But do you know,' said she, 'I shall have a great deal of business to-morrow—but I won't tell you what it is that I have to do, for I am afraid I shall not succeed; but if I do succeed, I'll come and tell you directly, because you will be so glad of it.'

Susan, who had always been attentive to what her mother taught her, and who had often assisted her when she was baking bread and cakes for the family at the Abbey, had now formed the courageous, but not presumptuous idea, that she could herself undertake to bake a batch of bread.—One of the servants from the Abbey had been sent all round the village in the morning, in search of bread, and had not been able to procure any that was tolerable. Mrs. Price's last baking failed for want of good barm, she was not now strong enough to attempt another herself; and when the brewer's boy came with eagerness to tell her that he had some fine



fresh yeast for her, she thanked him, but sighed, and said it would be of no use to her, she was too ill for the work. Susan modestly requested permission to try her hand, and her mother would not refuse her.\* Accordingly she went to work with much prudent care, and when her bread the next morning came out of the oven it was excellent—at least her mother said so, and she was a good judge. It was sent to the Abbey, and as the family there had not tasted any good bread since their arrival in the country, they also were earnest and warm in its praise. Inquiries were made from the house-keeper, and they heard, with some surprise, that this excellent bread was made by a young girl of twelve years old. The house-keeper, who had known Susan from a child, was pleased to have an opportunity of speaking in her favour.

‘She is the most industrious little creature, ma’am, in the world,’ said she to her mistress, ‘little I can’t so well call her now, since she’s grown tall and slender to look at; and glad I am she is grown up likely to look at, for handsome is that handsome does—and she thinks no more of her being handsome than I do myself—yet she has as proper a respect for herself, ma’am, as you have; and I always see her neat, and with her mother, ma’am, or fit people, as a girl should be; as for her mother, she doats upon her, as well she may, for I should myself if I had half such a daughter: and then she has two little brothers; and she’s as good to them, and my boy Philip says, taught ’em to read more than the school-mistress, all with tenderness and good nature; but I beg your pardon, ma’am, I cannot stop myself when I once begin to talk of Susan.’

‘You have really said enough to excite my curiosity,’ said her mistress, ‘pray send for her immediately, we can see her before we go out to walk.’

The benevolent house-keeper despatched her boy Philip for Susan. Susan was never in such an *untidy* state, that she could not obey such a summons without a long preparation. She had, it is true, been very busy, but orderly people can be busy and neat at the same time. She put on her usual straw hat, and accompanied Rose’s mother, who was going with a basket of cleared muslin to the Abbey.

\* This circumstance is founded on fact.

The modest simplicity of Susan's appearance, and the artless good sense and propriety of the answers she gave to all the questions that were asked her, pleased the ladies at the Abbey, who were good judges of character and manners.

Sir Arthur Somers had two sisters, sensible, benevolent women: they were not of that race of fine ladies who are miserable the moment they come to *the country*; nor yet were they of that bustling sort, who quack and direct all their poor neighbours, for the mere love of managing, or the want of something to do. They were judiciously generous, and whilst they wished to diffuse happiness, they were not peremptory in requiring that people should be happy precisely their own way. With these dispositions, and with a well-informed brother, who, though he never wished to direct, was always willing to assist in their efforts to do good, there were reasonable hopes, that these ladies would be a blessing to the poor villagers amongst whom they were now settled.

As soon as Miss Somers had spoken to Susan, she inquired for her brother; but Sir Arthur was in his study, and a gentleman was with him on business.

Susan was desirous of returning to her mother, and the ladies therefore would not detain her. Miss Somers told her with a smile, when she took leave, that she would call upon her in the evening at six o'clock.

It was impossible that such a grand event as Susan's visit to the Abbey could long remain unknown to Barbara Case and her gossiping maid. They watched eagerly for the moment of their return, that they might satisfy their curiosity.

'There she is, I declare, just come into her garden,' cried Bab, 'I'll run in and get it all out of her in a minute.'

Bab could descend, without shame, whenever it suited her purposes, from the height of insolent pride to the lowest meanness of fawning familiarity.

Susan was gathering some marigolds and some parsley for her mother's broth.

'So, Susan,' said Bab, who came close up to her before she perceived it, 'how goes the world with you to-day?'

‘My mother is rather better to-day, she says, ma’am—thank you,’ replied Susan coldly but civilly.

‘Ma’am, dear, how polite we are grown of a sudden!’ cried Bab, winking at her maid.—‘One may see you’ve been in good company this morning—Hey, Susan—come let’s hear about it?’—‘Did you see the ladies themselves, or was it only the house-keeper sent for you,’ said the maid.

‘What room did you go into?’ continued Bab; ‘Did you see Miss Somers, or Sir Arthur?’

‘Miss Somers.’

‘La! she saw Miss Somers! Betty, I must hear about it. Can’t you stop gathering those things for a minute, and chat a bit with us, Susan?’

‘I can’t stay, indeed, Miss Barbara, for my mother’s broth is just wanted, and I’m in a hurry.’ Susan ran home.

‘Lord, her head is full of broth now,’ said Bab to her maid, ‘and she has not a word for herself, though she has been abroad. My papa may well call her *Simple Susan*—for simple she is, and simple she will be all the world over; for my part I think she’s little better than a downright simpleton; but however, simple or not, I’ll get what I want out of her; she’ll be able to speak may be when she has settled the grand matter of the broth. I’ll step in and ask to see her mother; that will put her in a good humour in a trice.’

Barbara followed Susan into the cottage, and found her occupied with the grand affair of the broth.

‘Is it ready,’ said Bab, peeping into the pot that was over the fire, ‘dear, how savoury it smells! I’ll wait till you go in with it to your mother, for I must ask her how she does myself.’

‘Will you please to sit down then, Miss,’ said Simple Susan, with a smile, for at this instant she forgot the Guinea hen. ‘I have but just put the parsley into the broth, but it will soon be ready.’

During this interval Bab employed herself much to her own satisfaction, in cross-questioning Susan. She was rather provoked indeed that she could not learn exactly how each of the ladies was drest, and what there was to be for dinner at the Abbey; and she was curious beyond measure to find out what Miss Somers meant, by

saying that she would call at Mr. Price's cottage at six o'clock in the evening.—'What do you think she could mean?'

'I thought she meant what she said,' replied Susan, 'that she would come here at six o'clock.'

'Aye, that's as plain as a pike-staff,' said Barbara, 'but what else did she mean, think you? People you know don't always mean exactly, downright, neither more nor less than they say.'

'Not always,' said Susan, with an arch smile, which convinced Barbara that she was not quite a simpleton.

'*Not always,*' repeated Barbara, colouring,—'Oh, then, I suppose you have some guess at what Miss Somers meant.'

'No,' said Susan, 'I was not thinking about Miss Somers, when I said not always.'

'How nice that broth does look,' resumed Barbara, after a pause.

Susan had now poured the broth into a bason, and as she strewed over it the bright orange marigolds, it looked very tempting; she tasted it, and added now a little salt, and now a little more, till she thought it was just to her mother's taste.

'Oh, *I* must taste it,' said Bab, taking the bason up greedily.

'Won't you take a spoon,' said Susan, trembling at the large mouthfuls which Barbara sucked up with a terrible noise.

'Take a spoon, indeed!' exclaimed Barbara, setting down the bason in high anger.—'The next time I taste your broth you shall affront me, if you dare! The next time I set my foot in this house, you shall be as saucy to me as you please.' And she flounced out of the house, repeating, '*Take a spoon, pig,* was what you meant to say.'

Susan stood in amazement at the beginning of this speech, but the concluding words explained to her the mystery.

Some years before this time, when Susan was a very little girl, and could scarcely speak plain, as she was eating a bason of bread and milk for her supper at the cottage door, a great pig came up, and put his nose into

the bason. Susan was willing that the pig should have some share of the bread and milk, but as she ate with a spoon, and he with his large mouth, she presently discovered that he was likely to have more than his share, and in a simple tone of expostulation, she said to him, 'Take a *poon*, pig.)\*' The saying became proverbial in the village; Susan's little companions repeated it, and applied it upon many occasions, whenever any one claimed more than his share of any thing good. Barbara, who was then not Miss Barbara, but plain Bab, and who played with all the poor children in the neighbourhood, was often reprov'd in her unjust methods of division by Susan's proverb. Susan, as she grew up, forgot the childish saying, but the remembrance of it rankled in Barbara's mind, and it was to this that she suspected Susan had alluded, when she recommended a spoon to her whilst she was swallowing the bason of broth.

'La, Miss,' said Barbara's maid, when she found her mistress in a passion upon her return from Susan's, 'I only wonder you did her the honour to set your foot within her doors. What need have you to trouble her for news about the Abbey folks, when your own papa has been there all the morning, and is just come in, and can tell you every thing.'

Barbara did not know that her father meant to go to the Abbey that morning, for Attorney Case was mysterious even to his own family about his morning rides. He never chose to be asked where he was going, or where he had been, and this made his servants more than commonly inquisitive to trace him.

Barbara, against whose apparent childishness and real cunning, he was not sufficiently upon his guard, had often the art of drawing him into conversation about his visits.—She ran into her father's parlour, but she knew, the moment she saw his face, that it was no time to ask questions; his pen was across his mouth, and his brown wig pushed obliquely upon his contracted forehead—the wig was always pushed crooked whenever he was in a brown, or rather a black study. Barbara, who did not, like Susan, bear with her father's testy humour from af-

\* This is a true anecdote.

fection and gentleness of disposition, but who always humoured him from artifice, tried all her skill to fathom his thoughts, and when she found that *it* would not do, she went to tell her maid so, and to complain that her father was so cross, there was no bearing him.

It is true that Attorney Case was not in the happiest mood possible, for he was by no means satisfied with his morning's work at the Abbey. Sir Arthur Somers, the *new man*, did not suit him, and he began to be rather apprehensive, that he should not suit Sir Arthur.—He had sound reasons for his doubts.

Sir Arthur Somers was an excellent lawyer, and a perfectly honest man.—This seemed to our Attorney a contradiction in terms;—in the course of his practice the case had not occurred, and he had no precedents ready to direct his proceedings.

Sir Arthur Somers was a man of wit and eloquence, yet of plain dealing and humanity. The Attorney could not persuade himself to believe that the benevolence was any thing but enlightened cunning, and the plain dealing he one minute dreaded as the master-piece of art, and the next despised as the characteristic of folly. In short, he had not yet decided whether he was an honest man or a knave.—He had settled accounts with him for his late agency, he had talked about sundry matters of business, he constantly perceived that he could not impose upon Sir Arthur; but that he could know all the mazes of the law, and yet prefer the straight road, was incomprehensible.

Mr. Case paid him some compliments on his great legal abilities, his high reputation at the bar.

'I have left the bar,' replied Sir Arthur, coolly.

The Attorney looked in unfeigned astonishment, when a man was actually making 3000*l.* per annum at the bar, that he should leave it.

'I am come,' said he, 'to enjoy the kind of domestic life which I prefer to all others—in the country, amongst people whose happiness I hope to increase.'

At this speech the Attorney changed his ground, flattering himself that he should find his man averse to business, and ignorant of country affairs. He talked of the value of land, and of new leases.

Sir Arthur wished to enlarge his domain, to make a

ride round it. A map of the domain was upon the table, Farmer Price's garden came exactly across the new road for the ride. Sir Arthur looked disappointed, and the keen Attorney seized the moment to inform him that 'Price's whole land was at his disposal.'

'At my disposal! how so?' cried Sir Arthur eagerly; 'it will not be out of lease I believe these ten years. I'll look into the rent roll again, perhaps I am mistaken.'

'You are mistaken, my good Sir, and you are not mistaken,' said Mr. Case, with a shrewd smile; 'the land will not be out of lease these ten years in one sense, and in another it is out of lease at this time being. To come to the point at once, the lease is *ab origine* null and void. I have detected a capital flaw in the body of it; I pledge my credit upon it, Sir, it can't stand a single term in law or equity.'

The Attorney observed, that at these words Sir Arthur's eye was fixed with a look of earnest attention. 'Now I have him,' said the cunning tempter to himself.

'Neither in law nor equity?' repeated Sir Arthur, with apparent incredulity—'Are you sure of that, Mr. Case?'

'Sure! As I told you before, Sir, I'd pledge my whole credit upon the thing—I'd stake my existence.'

'That's something,' said Sir Arthur, as if he was pondering upon the matter.

The Attorney went on with all the eagerness of a keen man, who sees a chance at one stroke of winning a rich friend, and of ruining a poor enemy;—he explained with legal volubility, and technical amplification, the nature of the mistake in Mr. Price's lease. 'It was, Sir,' said he, 'a lease for the life of Peter Price, Susanna his wife, and to the survivor or survivors of them, or for the full time and term of twenty years, to be computed from the first day of May then next ensuing.—Now, Sir, this you see is a lease in reversion, which the late Sir Benjamin Somers had not, by his settlement, a right to make. This is a curious mistake, you see, Sir Arthur, and in filling up those printed leases there's always a good chance of some flaw; I find it perpetually, but I never found a better than this in the whole course of my practice.'

Sir Arthur stood in silence.

'My dear Sir,' said the attorney, taking him by the button, 'you have no scruple of stirring in this business.'

‘A little,’ said Sir Authur.

‘Why then that can be done away in a moment; your name shall not appear in it at all; you have nothing to do but to make over the lease to me—I make all safe to you with my bond.—Now being in possession, I come forward in my own proper person. *Shall I proceed?*’

‘No—You have said enough,’ replied Sir Arthur.

‘The case indeed lies in a nutshell,’ said the attorney, who had by this time worked himself up to such a pitch of professional enthusiasm, that, intent upon his vision of a law suit, he totally forgot to observe the impression his words made upon Sir Arthur.

‘There’s only one thing we have forgotten all this time,’ said Sir Arthur.

‘What can that be, Sir?’

‘That we shall ruin this poor man.’

Case was thunder-struck at these words, or rather by the look which accompanied them. He recollected, that he had laid himself open, before he was sure of Sir Arthur’s *real* character. He softened, and said he should have had certainly more *consideration* in the case of any but a litigious pig-headed fellow, as he knew Price to be.

‘If he be litigious,’ said Sir Arthur, ‘I shall certainly be glad to get him fairly out of the parish as soon as possible. When you go home, you will be so good, Sir, as to send me his lease, that I may satisfy myself, before we stir in this business.’

The attorney, brightening up, prepared to take leave, but he could not persuade himself to take his departure, without making one push at Sir Arthur about the agency.

‘I will not trouble *you*, Sir Arthur, with this lease of Price’s,’ said he; ‘I’ll leave it with your agent.—Whom shall I apply to?’

‘*To myself*, Sir, if you please,’ replied Sir Arthur.

The courtiers of Lewis the XIVth could not have looked more astounded than our attorney, when they received from their monarch a similar answer. It was this unexpected reply of Sir Arthur’s which had deranged the temper of Mr. Case, which had caused his wig to stand so crooked upon his forehead, and which rendered him impenetrably silent to his inquisitive daughter Barbara—After walking up and down his room conversing with himself for some time, he concluded, that the agency must



be given to somebody, when Sir Arthur should go to attend his duty in parliament; that the agency, even for the winter season, was not a thing to be neglected, and that, if he managed well, he might yet secure it for himself.—He had often found, that small timely presents worked wonderfully upon his own mind, and he judged of others by himself. The tenants had been in the reluctant but constant practice of making him continual petty offerings, and he resolved to try the same course with Sir Arthur, whose resolution to be his own agent he thought argued a close, saving, avaricious disposition.

He had heard the house-keeper at the Abbey inquiring, as he passed through the servants, whether there was any lamb to be gotten? She said that Sir Arthur was remarkably fond of lamb, and that she wished she could get a quarter for him.

Immediately he sallied into his kitchen, as soon as the idea struck him, and asked a shepherd, who was waiting there, whether he knew of a nice fat lamb to be had any where in the neighbourhood.

‘I know of one,’ cried Barbara, ‘Susan Price has a pet lamb, that’s as fat as fat can be.’

The attorney eagerly caught at these words, and speedily devised a scheme for obtaining Susan’s lamb for nothing.

It would be something strange if an attorney of his talents and standing was not an over-match for Simple Susan. He prowled forth in search of his prey; he found Susan packing up her father’s little wardrobe, and when she looked up as she knelt, he saw that she had been in tears.

‘How is your mother to-day, Susan?’

‘Worse, Sir.—My father goes to-morrow.’

‘That’s a pity.’

‘It can’t be helped,’ said Susan with a sigh.

‘It can’t be helped—how do you know that?’ said he.

‘Sir! dear Sir!’ cried she, looking up at him, and a sudden ray of hope beamed in her ingenuous countenance.

‘And if you could help it, Susan?’

Susan clasped her hands in silence, more expressive than words.

‘You *can* help it, Susan.’

She started up in an ecstasy.

‘What would you give now to have your father at home for a whole week longer?’

‘Any thing!—but I have nothing.’

‘Yes, but you have a lamb,’ said the hard-hearted attorney.

‘My poor little lamb!’ said Susan, ‘but what good can that do?’

‘What good can any lamb do?—is not lamb good to eat? Why do you look so pale, girl? Are not sheep killed every day, and don’t you eat mutton? Is your lamb better than any body else’s, think you?’

‘I don’t know, but I love it better.’

‘More fool you.’

‘It feeds out of my hand, it follows me about; I have always taken care of it, my mother gave it to me.’

‘Well, say no more about it then, if you love your lamb better than your father and your mother both, keep it, and good morning to you.’

‘Stay, oh stay!’ cried Susan, catching the skirt of his coat with an eager trembling hand;—‘a whole week, did you say? My mother may get better in that time.—No, I do not love my lamb half so well.’ The struggle of her mind ceased, and with a placid countenance and calm voice, ‘Take the lamb,’ said she.

‘Where is it?’ said the attorney.

‘Grazing in the meadow, by the river side.’

‘It must be brought up before night-fall for the butcher, remember.’

‘I shall not forget it,’ said Susan steadily. But as soon as her persecutor turned his back and quitted the house, she sat down, and hid her face in her hands. She was soon roused by the sound of her mother’s feeble voice, who was calling *Susan* from the inner room where she lay. Susan went in, but did not undraw the curtain as she stood beside the bed.

‘Are you there, love?—undraw the curtain, that I may see you, and tell me—I thought I heard some strange voice just now talking to my child.—Something’s amiss, Susan,’ said her mother, raising herself as well as she was able in the bed, to examine her daughter’s countenance.

‘Would you think it amiss then, my dear mother,’ said Susan, stooping to kiss her, ‘would you think it

amiss, if my father was to stay with us a week longer?’

‘Susan! you don’t say so?’

‘He is indeed a whole week;—but how burning hot your hand is still.’

‘Are you sure he will stay? How do you know? Who told you so?—Tell me all quick.’

‘Attorney Case told me so; he can get him a week’s longer leave of absence, and he has promised he will.’

‘God bless him for it for ever and ever!’ said the poor woman, joining her hands. ‘May the blessing of heaven be with him!’

Susan closed the curtains and was silent—she *could not say Amen.*

She was called out of the room at this moment, for a messenger was come from the Abbey for the bread bills.—It was she who always made out the bills, for though she had not had a great number of lessons from the writing-master, she had taken so much pains to learn, that she could write a very neat, legible hand, and she found this very useful; she was not, to be sure, particularly inclined to draw out a long bill at this instant, but business must be done.—She set to work, ruled her lines for the pounds, shillings, and pence, made out the bill for the Abbey, and despatched the impatient messenger; then she resolved to make out all the bills for the neighbours, who had many of them taken a few loaves and rolls of her baking. ‘I had better get all my business finished,’ said she to herself, ‘before I go down to the meadow to take leave of my poor lamb.’ This was sooner said than done; for she found that she had a great number of bills to write, and the slate on which she had entered the account was not immediately to be found, and when it was found, the figures were almost rubbed out; Barbara had sat dawn upon it; Susan pored over the number of loaves, and the names of the persons who took them, and she wrote, and cast up sums, and corrected and recorrected them, till her head grew quite puzzled.

The table was covered with little square bits of paper, on which she had been writing bills over and over again, when her father came in with a bill in his hand.

‘How’s this, Susan?’ said he;—‘How can you be so

careless, child? What is your head running upon? Here look at the bill you were sending up to the Abbey! I met the messenger, and luckily asked to see how much it was.—Look at it.’

Susan looked and blushed; it was written, ‘Sir Arthur Somers to John Price, debtor six dozen *lambs*, so much.’ She altered it, and returned it to her father; but he had taken up some of the papers which lay upon the table.—‘What are all these child?’

‘Some of them are wrong, and I’ve written them out again,’ said Susan.

‘Some of them! all of them, I think seem to be wrong, if I can read,’ said her father, rather angrily; and he pointed out to her sundry strange mistakes.

Her head indeed had been running upon her poor lamb. She corrected all the mistakes with so much patience, and bore to be blamed with so much good humour, that her father at last said, that it was impossible ever to scold Susan without being in the wrong at the last.

As soon as all was set right, he took the bills, and said he would go round to the neighbours, and collect the money himself, for that he should be very proud to have it to say to them, that it was all earned by his own little daughter.

Susan resolved to keep the pleasure of telling him of his week’s reprieve till he should come home to sup, as he had promised to do, in her mother’s room.—She was not sorry to hear him sigh as he passed the knapsack, which she had been packing up for his journey.

‘How delighted will he be when he hears the good news!’ said she to herself; ‘but I know he will be a little sorry too for my poor lamb.’

As she had now settled all her business, she thought she could have time to go down to the meadow by the river side to see her favourite; but just as she had tied on her straw hat, the village clock struck four, and this was the hour at which she always went to fetch her little brothers home from a dame-school near the village. She knew that they would be disappointed if she was later than usual, and she did not like to keep them waiting, because they were very patient, good boys; so she put off the visit to her lamb, and went immediately for her brothers.

# SIMPLE SUSAN.

## CHAPTER II.

‘ Ev’n in the spring, and play-time of the year,  
‘ That calls th’ unwonted villager abroad,  
‘ With all her little ones, a sportive train,  
‘ To gather king cups in the yellow mead,  
‘ And prink their heads with daisies.’

COWPER.

**T**HE dame-school, which was about a mile from the hamlet, was not a splendid mansion, but it was revered as much by the young race of village scholars, as if it had been the most stately edifice in the land; it was a low roofed, long, thatched tenement, sheltered by a few reverend oaks, under which many generations of hopeful children had in their turn gambolled. The close-shaven green, which sloped down from the hatch-door of the school-room, was paled round with a rude paling, which, though decayed in some parts by time, was not in any place broken by violence. The place bespoke order and peace. The dame who governed here was well obeyed, because she was just, and well beloved, because she was ever glad to give well-earned praise, and pleasure to her little subjects.

Susan had once been under her gentle dominion, and had been deservedly her favourite scholar; the dame often cited her as the best example to the succeeding tribe of emulous youngsters.

Susan had scarcely opened the wicket, which separated the green before the school-room door from the lane, when she heard the merry voices of the children, and saw the little troop issuing from the hatchway, and spreading over the green.

‘ Oh! there’s our Susan!’ cried her two little brothers, running, leaping, and bounding up to her, and many of the other rosy girls and boys crowded round her, to talk of their plays, for Susan was easily interested in all that made others happy; but she could not make them comprehend, that, if they all spoke at once, it was not pos-

sible that she could hear what was said. The voices were still raised one above another, all eager to establish some important observation about nine-pins, or marbles, or tops, or bows and arrows, when suddenly music was heard, unusual music, and the crowd was silenced. The music seemed to be near the spot where the children were standing, and they looked round to see whence it could come.

Susan pointed to the great oak tree, and they beheld, seated under its shade, an old man playing upon his harp.

The children all approached—at first timidly, for the sounds were solemn, but as the harper heard their little footsteps coming towards him, he changed his hands, and played one of his most lively tunes. The circle closed, and pressed nearer and nearer to him; some who were in the foremost row whispered to each other, ‘He is blind! What a pity!’ and ‘He looks very poor, what a ragged coat he wears!’ said others. ‘He must be very old, for his hair is white, and he must have travelled a great way, for his shoes are quite worn out,’ observed another.

All these remarks were made whilst he was tuning his harp, for when he once more began to play not a word was uttered.

He seemed pleased by their simple exclamations of wonder and delight, and, eager to amuse his young audience, he played now a gay and now a pathetic air, to suit their several humours.

Susan’s voice, which was soft and sweet, expressive of gentleness and good nature, caught his ear the moment she spoke; he turned his face eagerly to the place where she stood, and it was observed, that whenever she said that she liked any tune particularly, he played it over again.

‘I am blind,’ said the old man, ‘and cannot see your faces, but I know you all asunder by your voices, and I can guess pretty well at all your humours and characters by your voices.’

‘Can you so indeed?’ cried Susan’s little brother William, who had stationed himself between the old man’s knees. ‘Then you heard *my* sister Susan speak just now.—Can you tell us what sort of a person she is?’

‘That I can, I think, without being a conjurer,’ said

the old man, lifting the boy up on his knee, 'your sister Susan is good-natured.'

The boy clapped his hands.

'And good-tempered.'

'Right,' said little William with a louder clap of applause.

'And very fond of the little boy who sits upon my knee.'

'O right! right! quite right!' exclaimed the child, and quite right' echoed on all sides.

'But how came you to know so much, when you are blind?' said William, examining the old man attentively.

'Hush,' said John, who was a year older than his brother, and very sage, 'you should not put him in mind of his being blind.'

'Though I am blind,' said the harper, 'I can hear, you know, and I heard from your sister herself all that I told you of her, that she was good-tempered and good-natured, and fond of you.'

'Oh, that's wrong—you did not hear all that from herself, I'm sure,' said John 'for nobody ever hears her praising herself.'

'Did not I hear her tell you, when you first came round me, that she was in a great hurry to go home, but that she would stay a little while, since you wished it so much—Was not that good-natured? and when you said you did not like the tune she liked best, she was not angry with you, but said 'then, play William's first, if you please.'—Was not that good-tempered?'

'Oh,' interrupted William, 'It's all true; but how did you find out that she was fond of me?'

'That is such a difficult question,' said the harper, 'that I must take time to consider.'—He tuned his harp as he pondered, or seemed to ponder; and at this instant, two boys, who had been searching for birds' nests in the hedges, and who had heard the sound of the harp, came blustering up, and pushing their way through the circle, one of them exclaimed,

'What's going on here?—Who are you, my old fellow?—A blind harper; well, play us a tune, if you can play ever a good one—play me—let's see, what shall he play, Bob?' added he, turning to his companion. 'Bumper Squire Jones.'

The old man, though he did not seem quite pleased with the peremptory manner of the request, played, as he was desired, 'Bumper Squire Jones;' and several other tunes were afterwards bespoke by the same rough and tyrannical voice.

The little children shrunk back in timid silence, and eyed the great brutal boy with dislike.

This boy was the son of attorney Case, and as his father had neglected to correct his temper when he was a child, as he grew up it became insufferable; all who were younger and weaker than himself, dreaded his approach, and detested him as a tyrant.

When the old harper was so tired, that he could play no more, a lad, who usually carried his harp for him, and who was within call, came up, and held his master's hat to the company, saying, 'Will you be pleased to remember us.' The children readily produced their half-pence, and thought their wealth well bestowed upon this poor good-natured man, who had taken so much pains to entertain them, better even than upon the gingerbread-woman, whose stall they loved to frequent. The hat was held some time to the attorney's son before he chose to see it; at last he put his hand surlily into his waistcoat pocket, and pulled out a shilling; there were sixpenny worth of half-pence in the hat, 'I'll take these half-pence,' said he, 'and here's a shilling for you.'

'God bless you, Sir,' said the lad, but as he took the shilling, which the young gentleman had slyly put *into the blind man's hand*, he saw that it was not worth one farthing.

'I am afraid it is not good, Sir,' said the lad, whose business it was to examine the money for his master.

'I am afraid then you'll get no other,' said young Case, with an insulting laugh.

'It never will do, Sir,' persisted the lad, 'look at it yourself, the edges are all yellow; you can see the copper through it quite plain; Sir, nobody will take it from us.'

'That's your affair,' said the brutal boy, pushing away his hand; 'you may pass it, you know, as well as I do, if you look sharp—you have taken it from me, and I shan't take it back again, I promise you.'



A whisper of 'that's very unjust,' was heard.—The little assembly, though under evident constraint, could no longer suppress their indignation.

'Who says it's unjust?' cried the tyrant sternly, looking down upon his judges.

Susan's little brothers had held her gown fast to prevent her from moving at the beginning of this contest, and she was now so much interested to see the end of it, that she stood still, without making any resistance.

'Is any one here amongst yourselves a judge of silver,' said the old man.

'Yes, here's the butcher's boy,' said the attorney's son, 'shew it to him.'

He was a sickly looking boy, and of a remarkably peaceable disposition.

Young Case fancied that he would be afraid to give judgment against him; however, after some moments' hesitation, and after turning the shilling round several times, he pronounced, 'that, as far as his judgment went, but he did not pretend to be downright *certain* sure of it, the shilling was not over and above good.' Then turning to Susan, to screen himself from manifest danger, for the attorney's son looked upon him with a vengeful mein, 'But here's Susan here, who understands silver a great deal better than I do, she takes a power of it for bread, you know.'

'I'll leave it to her,' said the old harper; 'if she says the shilling is good, keep it, Jack.'

The shilling was handed to Susan, who, though she had with becoming modesty foreborne all interference, did not hesitate, when she was called upon, to speak the truth; 'I think that this shilling is a bad one,' said she, and the gentle, but firm tone in which she pronounced the words, for a moment awed and silenced the angry and brutal boy.

'There's another then,' cried he; 'I have sixpences and shillings too in plenty, thank my stars.'

Susan now walked away with her two little brothers, and all the other children separated to go to their several homes.

The old harper called to Susan, and begged, that, if she was going towards the village, she would be so kind as to shew him the way.

His lad took up his harp, and little William took the old man by the hand, 'I'll lead him, I can lead him,' said he: and John ran on before them, to gather king-cups in the meadow.

There was a small rivulet, which they had to cross, and as the plank which served for a bridge over it was rather narrow, Susan was afraid to trust the old blind man to his little conductor; she therefore went on the tottering plank first herself, and then led the old harper carefully over; they were now come to a gate, which opened upon the high road to the village.

'There is the high road straight before you,' said Susan to the lad, who was carrying his master's harp, 'you can't miss it; now I must bid you a good evening, for I'm in a great hurry to get home, and must go the short way across the fields here, which would not be so pleasant for you, because of the stiles.—Goodbye.'

The old harper thanked her, and went along the high road, whilst she and her brothers tripped on as fast as they could by the short way across the fields.

'Miss Somers, I am afraid, will be waiting for us,' said Susan; 'you know she said she would call at six, and by the length of our shadows I'm sure it is late.'

When they came to their own cottage door, they heard many voices, and they saw, when they entered, several ladies standing in the kitchen.

'Come in, Susan, we thought you had quit forsaken us,' said Miss Somers to Susan, who advanced timidly. 'I fancy you forgot, that we promised to pay you a visit this evening; but you need not blush so much about the matter, there is no great harm done, we have only been here about five minutes, and we have been well employed in admiring your neat garden, and your orderly shelves. Is it you, Susan, who keep these things in such nice order?' continued Miss Somers, looking round the kitchen.

Before Susan could reply, little William pushed forward, and answered,

'Yes, Ma'am, it is *my* sister Susan that keeps every thing neat, and she always comes to school for us too, which was what caused her to be so late.' 'Because as how,' continued John, 'she was loth to refuse us the

hearing a blind man play upon the harp—it was we kept her, and we hopes Ma'am as you *are*—as you *seem* so good, you won't take it amiss.'

Miss Somers and her sister smiled at the affectionate simplicity, with which Susan's little brothers undertook her defence, and they were, from this slight circumstance, disposed to think yet more favourably of a family, which seemed so well united.

They took Susan along with them through the village; many came to their doors, and far from envying, all secretly wished Susan well as she passed.

'I fancy we shall find what we want here,' said Miss Somers, stopping before a shop, where unfolded sheets of pins and glass buttons glistened in the window, and where rolls of many coloured ribbons appeared ranged in tempting order. She went in, and was rejoiced to see the shelves at the back of the counter well furnished with glossy tiers of stuffs, and gay, neat, printed linens and calicoes.

'Now, Susan, choose yourself a gown,' said Miss Somers; 'you set an example of industry and good conduct, of which we wish to take public notice, for the benefit of others.'

The shopkeeper, who was father to Susan's friend Rose, looked much satisfied by this speech, and as if a compliment had been paid to himself, bowed low to Miss Somers, and then with alertness, which a London linen draper might have admired, produced piece after piece of his best goods to his young customer—unrolled, unfolded, held the bright stuffs and calendered calicoes in various lights. Now stretched his arm to the highest shelves, and brought down in a trice what seemed to be beyond the reach of any but a giant's arm; now dived into some hidden recesses beneath the counter, and brought to light fresh beauties, and fresh temptations.

Susan looked on with more indifference than most of the spectators.—She was thinking much of her lamb, and more of her father.

Miss Somers had put a bright guinea into her hand, and had bid her pay for her own gown; but Susan, as she looked at the guinea, thought it was a great deal of money to lay out upon herself, and she wished, but did not

know how to ask, that she might keep it for a better purpose.

Some people are wholly inattentive to the lesser feelings, and incapable of reading the countenances of those on whom they bestow their bounty.—Miss Somers and her sister were not of this roughly charitable class.

‘She does not like any of these things,’ whispered Miss Somers to her sister.

Her sister observed, that Susan looked as if her thoughts were far distant from gowns.

‘If you don’t fancy any of these things,’ said the civil shopkeeper to Susan, ‘we shall have a new assortment of calicoes for the spring season soon from town.’

‘Oh,’ interrupted Susan, with a smile and a blush, ‘these are all pretty, and too good for me, but——’

‘*But* what, Susan?’ said Miss Somers. ‘Tell us what is passing in your little mind.’

Susan hesitated.

‘Well then, we will not press you; you are scarcely acquainted with us yet, when you are you will not be afraid, I hope, to speak your mind.—Put this shining yellow counter,’ continued she, pointing to the guinea, ‘in your pocket, and make what use of it you please. From what we know, and from what we have heard of you, we are persuaded that you will make a good use of it.’

‘I think, Madam,’ said the master of the shop, with a shrewd good-natured look, ‘I could give a pretty good guess myself what will become of that guinea—but I say nothing.’

‘No, that is right,’ said Miss Somers, ‘we leave Susan entirely at liberty, and now we will not detain her any longer. Good night Susan, we shall soon come again to your neat cottage.’

Susan courtesied with an expressive look of gratitude, and with a modest frankness in her countenance, which seemed to say, ‘I would tell you and welcome what I want to do with the guinea—but I am not used to speak before so many people; when you come to our cottage again you shall know all.’

When Susan had departed, Miss Somers turned to the obliging shopkeeper, who was folding up all the things he had opened, ‘You have had a great deal of

trouble with us, Sir,' said she, 'and since Susan will not choose a gown for herself, I must.'—She selected the prettiest, and whilst the man was rolling it in paper, she asked him several questions about Susan and her family, which he was delighted to answer, because he had now an opportunity of saying as much as he wished in her praise.

'No later back, Ma'am, than last May morning,' said he, 'as my daughter Rose was telling us, Susan did a turn, in her quiet way, by her mother, that would not displease you if you were to hear it. She was to have been Queen of the May, ladies, which, in our little village, amongst the younger tribe, is a thing, ladies, that is thought of a good deal—but Susan's mother was ill, and Susan, after sitting up with her all night, would not leave her in the morning, even when they brought the crown to her.—She put the crown upon my daughter Rose's head with her own hands, and to be sure Rose loves her as well as if she were her own sister; but I don't speak from partiality, for I am no relation whatever to the Prices, only a well-wisher, as every one, I believe, who knows them, is.—I'll send the parcel up to the Abbey, shall I, Ma'am?'

'If you please,' said Miss Somers, 'and let us know as soon as you receive your new things from town. You will, I hope, find us good customers, and well-wishers,' added she with a smile, 'for those who wish well to their neighbours surely deserve to have well-wishers themselves.'

A few words may encourage the benevolent passions, and may dispose people to live in peace and happiness;—a few words may set them at variance, and may lead to misery and lawsuits.—Attorney Case and Miss Somers were both equally convinced of this, and their practice was uniformly consistent with their principles.

But now to return to Susan.—She put the bright guinea carefully into the glove with the twelve shillings, which she had received from her companions on May-day. Besides this treasure, she calculated, that the amount of the bills for bread could not be less than eight or nine and thirty shillings, and as her father was now sure of a week's reprieve, she had great hopes, that, by

some means or other, it would be possible to make up the whole sum necessary to pay for a substitute. 'If that could but be done,' said she to herself, 'how happy would my mother be!--She would be quite stout again, for she certainly is a great deal better since morning, since I told her that father would stay a week longer.-- Ah! but she would not have blessed attorney Case though, if she had known about my poor Daisy.'

Susan took the path that led to the meadow by the water side, resolved to go by herself, and take leave of her innocent favourite. But she did not pass by unperceived; her little brothers were watching for her return, and as soon as they saw her, they ran after her, and overtook her as she reached the meadow.

'What did that good lady want with you?' cried William; but looking up in his sister's face, he saw tears in her eyes, and he was silent, and walked on quietly.

Susan saw her lamb by the water-side.

'Who are those two men?' said William. 'What are they going to do with *Daisy*?'

The two men were attorney Case and the butcher.-- The butcher was feeling whether the lamb was fat.

Susan sat down upon the bank in silent sorrow;--her little brothers ran up to the butcher, and demanded whether he was going to *do any harm* to the lamb.

The butcher did not answer, but the attorney replied, 'It is not your sister's lamb any longer, it's mine---mine to all intents and purposes.'

'Yours!' cried the children with terror; 'and will you kill it?'

'That's the butcher's business.'

The little boys now burst into piercing lamentations; they pushed away the butcher's hand, they threw their arms round the neck of the lamb, they kissed it's forehead---it bleated.

'It will not bleat to-morrow!' said William, and he wept bitterly.

The butcher looked aside, and hastily rubbed his eyes with the corner of his blue apron.

The attorney stood unmoved; he pulled up the head of the lamb, which had just stooped to crop a mouthful of clover.--'I have no time to waste,' said he; 'butcher.

you'll account with me. If it's fat---the sooner the better. I've no more to say.' And he walked off, deaf to the prayers of the poor children.

As soon as the attorney was out of sight, Susan rose from the bank where she was seated, came up to her lamb, and stooped to gather some of the fresh dewy trefoil, to let it eat out of her hand for the last time.—Poor Daisy licked her well-known hand.

'Now, let us go,' said Susan.

'I'll wait as long as you please,' said the butcher.

Susan thanked him, but walked away quickly, without looking again at her lamb.

Her little brothers begged the man to stay a few minutes, for they had gathered a handful of blue speedwell and yellow crowsfoot, and they were decking the poor animal.

As it followed the boys through the village, the children collected as they passed, and the butcher's own son was among the number. Susan's steadiness about the bad shilling was full in this boy's memory, it had saved him a beating; he went directly to his father to beg the life of Susan's lamb.

'I was thinking about it, boy, myself,' said the butcher; 'it's a sin to kill a *pet* lamb, I'm thinking---any way it's what I'm not used to, and don't fancy doing, and I'll go and say as much to attorney Case---but he's a hard man; there's but one way to deal with him, and that's the way I must take, though so be I shall be the loser thereby, but we'll say nothing to the boys, for fear it might be the thing would not take, and then it would be worse again to poor Susan, who is a good girl, and always was, as well she may, being of a good breed, and well reared from the first.'

'Come, lads, don't keep a crowd and a scandal about my door,' continued he, aloud, to the children; 'turn the lamb in here, John, in the paddock, for to-night, and go your ways home.'

The crowd dispersed, but murmured, and the butcher went to the attorney. 'Seeing that all you want is a good, fat, tender lamb, for a present for Sir Arthur, as you told me,' said the butcher, 'I could let you have what's as good and better for your purpose.'

'Better—if it's better I'm ready to hear to reason.'

The butcher had a choice, tender lamb, he said, fit to eat the next day, and as Mr. Case was impatient to make his offering to Sir Arthur, he accepted the butcher's proposal, though with such seeming reluctance, that he actually squeezed out of him, before he would complete the bargain, a bribe of a fine sweetbread.

In the mean time Susan's brothers ran home to tell her, that her lamb was put into the paddock for the night; this was all they knew, and even this was some comfort to her.—Rose, her good friend, was with her, and she had before her the pleasure of telling her father of his week's reprieve—her mother was better, and even said she was determined to sit up to supper in her wicker arm chair.

Susan was getting things ready for supper, when little William, who was standing at the house-door, watching in the dusk for his father's return, suddenly exclaimed, 'Susan! if here is not our old man!'

'Yes,' said the old harper, 'I have found my way to you; the neighbours were kind enough to shew me whereabouts you lived, for though I didn't know your name, they guessed who I meant by what I said of you all.'

Susan came to the door, and the old man was delighted to hear her speak again.

'If it would not be too bold,' said he, 'I'm a stranger in this part of the country, and come from afar off; my boy has got a bed for himself here in the village, but I have no place—could you be so charitable as to give an old blind man a night's lodging?'

Susan said she would step and ask her mother, and she soon returned with an answer, that he was heartily welcome, if he could sleep upon the children's bed, which was but small.

The old man thankfully entered the hospitable cottage—he struck his head against the low roof as he stepped over the door sill.

'Many roofs that are twice as high are not half so good,' said he.

Of this he had just had experience at the house of attorney Case, where he had asked, but had been roughly refused all assistance by Mrs. Barbara, who was, ac-



according to her usual custom, standing staring at the hall door.

The old man's harp was set down in farmer Price's kitchen, and he promised to play a tune for the boys before they went to bed; their mother giving them leave to sit up to supper with their father.

He came home with a sorrowful countenance, but how soon did it brighten, when Susan, with a smile, said to him, 'Father, we've good news for you! good news for us all!—You have a whole week longer to stay with us, and perhaps,' continued she, putting her little purse into his hands; 'perhaps with what's here, and the bread bills, and what may some how be got together before a week's at an end, we may make up the nine guineas for the substitute, as they call him; who knows, dearest mother, but we may keep him with us for ever!'—As she spoke, she threw her arms round her father, who pressed her to his bosom without speaking, for his heart was full. He was some little time, before he could perfectly believe that what he heard was true, but the revived smiles of his wife, the noisy joy of his little boys, and the satisfaction that shone in Susan's countenance, convinced him that he was not in a dream.

As they sat down to supper, the old harper was made welcome to his share of the cheerful, though frugal meal.

Susan's father, as soon as supper was finished, even before he would let the harper play a tune for his boys, opened the little purse, which Susan had given to him; he was surprised at the sight of the twelve shillings, and still more, when he came to the bottom of the purse, to see the bright golden guinea.

'How did you come by all this money, Susan?' said he.

'Honestly and handsomely, that I'm sure of beforehand,' said her proud mother, 'but how I can't make out, except by the baking.---Hey, Susan, is this your first baking?'

'Oh, no, no,' said her father, 'I have her first baking snug here, besides, in my pocket. I kept it for a surprise to do your mother's heart good, Susan. Here's twenty-nine shillings, and the Abbey bill, which is not paid yet, comes to ten more.—What think you of this,

wife? have we not a right to be proud of our Susan?' 'Why,' continued he, turning to the harper, 'I ask your pardon for speaking out so free before strangers in praise of my own, which I know is not mannerly; but the truth is the fittest thing to be spoken, as I think, at all times, therefore here's your good health, Susan?---why, by and by she'll be worth her weight in gold---in silver at least. ---But tell us, child, how came you by all this riches? and how comes it that I don't go to-morrow?---All this happy news makes me so gay in myself, I'm afraid I shall hardly understand it rightly.---But speak on, child---first bringing us a bottle of the good mead you made last year from your own honey.'

Susan did not much like to tell the history of the Guinea hen---of the gown---and of her poor lamb---part of this would seem as if she was vaunting of her own generosity, and part of it she did not like to recollect. But her mother pressed to know the whole, and she related it as simply as she could. When she came to the story of her lamb, her voice faltered, and every body present was touched.---The old harper sighed once, and cleared his throat several times---he then asked for his harp, and, after tuning it for a considerable time, he recollected, for he had often fits of absence, that he sent for it to play the tune he had promised to the boys.

This harper came from a great distance, from the mountains of Wales, to contend with several other competitors for a prize, which had been advertised by a musical society about a year before this time. There was to be a splendid ball given upon the occasion at Shrewsbury, which was about five miles from our village. The prize was ten guineas for the best performer on the harp, and the prize was now to be decided in a few days.

All this intelligence Barbara had long since gained from her maid, who often went to visit in the town of Shrewsbury, and she had long had her imagination inflamed with the idea of this splendid music meeting and ball. Often had she sighed to be there, and often had she revolved in her mind schemes for introducing herself to some *genteel* neighbours, who might take her to the ball *in their carriage*.---How rejoiced, how triumphant was she, when this very evening, just about the time

when the butcher was bargaining with her father about Susan's lamb, a *livery* servant from the Abbey rapped at the door, and left a card of invitation for Mr. and Miss Barbara Case.

'There,' cried Bab, 'I and *papa* are to dine and drink tea at the Abbey to-morrow.---Who knows?---I dare say, when they see that I'm not a vulgar-looking person, and all that---and if I go cunningly to work with Miss Somers---as I shall---to be sure, I dare say, she'll take me to the ball with her.'

'To be sure,' said the maid, 'it's the least one may expect from a lady that *demeans* herself to visit Susan Price, and goes about a shopping for her; the least she can do for you is to take you in her carriage, *which* costs nothing, but is just a common civility to a ball.'

'Then pray, Betty,' continued Miss Barbara, 'don't forget to-morrow, the first thing you do, to send off to Shrewsbury for my new bonnet---I must have it *to dine in*, at the Abbey, or the ladies will think nothing of me---and, Betty, remember the mantua-maker too. I must see and coax *papa*, to buy me a new gown against the ball. I can see, you know, something of the fashions to-morrow at the Abbey, I shall *look the ladies well over*, I promise you.---And, Betty, I have thought of the most charming present for Miss Somers: as *papa* says, it's good never to go empty-handed to a great house, I'll make Miss Somers, who is fond, as her maid told you, of such things---I'll make Miss Somers a present of that Guinea hen of Susan's;---it's of no use to me, so do you carry it up early in the morning to the Abbey, with my compliments.---That's the thing.'

In full confidence that her present, and her bonnet, would operate effectually in her favour, Miss Barbara paid her first visit at the Abbey. She expected to see wonders, she was dressed in all the finery, which she had heard from her maid, who had heard from the 'prentice of a Shrewsbury milliner, was *the thing* in London; and she was much surprised and disappointed, when she was shewn into the room where the Miss Somerses, and the ladies at the Abbey were sitting, to see that they did not, in any one part of their dress, agree with the picture her imagination had formed of fashionable ladies. She was

embarrassed when she saw books, and work, and drawings upon the table, and she began to think, that some affront was meant to her, because *the company* did not sit with their hands before them. When Miss Somers endeavoured to find out conversation that would interest her, and spoke of walks, and flowers, and gardening, of which she was herself fond, Miss Barbara still thought herself under-valued, and soon contrived to expose her ignorance most completely, by talking of things which she did not understand.

Those who never attempt to appear what they are not—those who do not in their manners pretend to any thing unsuited to their habits and situation in life, never are in danger of being laughed at by sensible, well-bred people of any rank; but affectation is the constant and just object of ridicule.

Miss Barbara Case, with her mistaken airs of gentility, aiming to be thought a woman, and a fine lady, whilst she was in reality a child, and a vulgar attorney's daughter, rendered herself so thoroughly ridiculous, that the good-natured, yet discerning spectators, were painfully divided between their sense of comic absurdity, and a feeling of shame for one who could feel nothing for herself.

One by one the ladies dropped off—Miss Somers went out of the room for a few minutes to alter her dress, as it was the custom of the family, before dinner. She left a port-folio of pretty drawings and good prints, for Miss Barbara's amusement; but Miss Barbara's thoughts were so intent upon the harper's ball, that she could not be entertained with such *trifles*.

How unhappy are those, who spend their time in expectation! they can never enjoy the present moment.

Whilst Barbara was contriving means of interesting Miss Somers in her favour, she recollected, with surprise, that not one word had yet been said of her present of the Guinea hen.

Mrs. Betty, in the hurry of her dressing her young lady in the morning, had forgotten it, but it came just whilst Miss Somers was dressing, and the house-keeper came into her mistress's room to announce its arrival.

'Ma'am,' says she, 'here's a beautiful Guinea hen just come *with* Miss Barbara Case's compliments to you.'

Miss Somers knew, by the tone in which the house-keeper delivered this message, that there was something in the business, which did not perfectly please her. She made no answer, in expectation that the house-keeper, who was a woman of a very open temper, would explain her cause of dissatisfaction.---In this she was not mistaken, the house-keeper came close up to the dressing-table, and continued, 'I never like to speak till I'm sure ma'am, and I'm not quite sure, to say certain, in this case, ma'am, but still I think it right to tell you, which can't wrong any body, what came across my mind about this same Guinea hen, ma'am, and you can inquire into it, and do as you please afterwards, ma'am. Some time ago we had fine Guinea fowls of our own, and I made bold, not thinking, to be sure, that all our own would die away from us, as they have done, to give a fine couple last Christmas to Susan Price, and very fond and pleased she was at the time, and I'm sure would never have parted with the hen with her good will; but if my eyes don't strangely mistake, this hen, that comes from Miss Barbara, is the self-same identical Guinea hen that I gave to Susan. And how Miss Bab came by it is the thing that puzzles me. If my boy Philip was at home, may be, as he's often at Mrs. Price's (which I don't disapprove,) he might know the history of the Guinea hen. I expect him home this night, and, if you have no objection, I will sift the affair.'

'The shortest way, I should think,' said Henrietta, 'would be to ask Miss Case herself about it, which I will do this evening.'

'If you please, ma'am,' said the house-keeper, coldly, for she knew that Miss Barbara was not famous in the village for speaking truth.

Dinner was now served.---Attorney Case expected to smell mint-sauce, and, as the covers were taken from off the dishes, looked around for lamb---but no lamb appeared.---He had a dexterous knack of twisting the conversation to his point.

Sir Arthur was speaking, when they sat down to dinner, of a new carving-knife, which he lately had had made for his sister; the attorney immediately went from carving-knives to poultry, thence to butcher's meat,

some joints he observed were much more difficult to carve than others; he never saw a man carve better than the gentleman opposite him, who was the curate of the parish. 'But, Sir,' said the vulgar attorney, 'I must make bold to differ with you in one point, and I'll appeal to Sir Arthur. Sir Arthur, pray, may I ask, when you carve a fore-quarter of lamb, do you, when you raise the shoulder, throw in salt or not?'

This well-prepared question was not lost upon Sir Arthur; the attorney was thanked for his intended present, but mortified and surprised, to hear Sir Arthur say, that it was a constant rule of his never to accept of any presents from his neighbours. 'If we were to accept a lamb from a rich neighbour on my estate,' said he, 'I am afraid we should mortify many of our poor tenants, who can have little to offer, though, perhaps, they may bear us thorough good-will notwithstanding.'

After the ladies left the dining-room, as they were walking up and down the large hall, Miss Barbara had a fair opportunity of imitating her keen father's method of conversing. One of the ladies observed, that this hall would be a charming place for music---Bab brought in harps, and harpers, and the harpers' ball, in a breath.---'I know so much about it, about the ball I mean,' said she, 'because a lady in Shrewsbury, a friend of papa's, offered to take me with her, but papa did not like to give her the trouble of sending so far for me, though she has a coach of her own.'

Barbara fixed her eyes upon Miss Somers, as she spoke, but she could not read her countenance as distinctly she wished, because Miss Somers was at this moment letting down the veil of her hat.

'Shall we walk out before tea?' said she to her companions. 'I have a pretty Guinea hen to shew you.'

Barbara, secretly drawing propitious omens from the Guinea hen, followed with a confidential step.

The pheasantry was well filled with pheasants, peacocks, &c. and Susan's pretty little Guinea hen appeared well, even in this high company---it was much admired. Barbara was in glory---but her glory was of short duration. Just as Miss Somers was going to inquire into the Guinea hen's history, Philip came up to

ask permission to have a bit of sycamore, to turn a nutmeg-box for his mother.

Philip was an ingenious lad, and a good turner for his age; Sir Arthur had put by a bit of sycamore on purpose for him, and Miss Somers told him where it was to be found. He thanked her, but in the midst of his bow of thanks his eye was struck by the sight of the Guinea hen, and he involuntarily exclaimed, 'Susan's Guinea hen, I declare!'

'No, it's not Susan's Guinea hen,' said Miss Barbara, colouring furiously. 'It is mine, and I've made a present of it to Miss Somers.'

At the sound of Bab's voice Philip turned---saw her---and indignation, unrestrained by the presence of all the amazed spectators, flashed in his countenance.

'What is the matter, Philip?' said Miss Somers, in a pacifying tone;---but Philip was not inclined to be pacified.

'Why, ma'am,' said he, 'may I speak out?' and, without waiting for permission, he spoke out, and gave a full, true, and warm account of Rose's embassy, and of Miss Barbara's cruel and avaricious proceedings.

Barbara denied, prevaricated, stammered, and at last was overcome with confusion, for which even the most indulgent spectators could scarcely pity her.

Miss Somers, however, mindful of what was due to her guest, was anxious to despatch Philip for his piece of sycamore.

Bab recovered herself as soon as he was out of sight; but she farther exposed herself by exclaiming, 'I'm sure I wish this pitiful Guinea hen had never come into my possession. I wish Susan had kept it at home, as she should have done!'

'Perhaps she will be more careful now, that she has received so strong a lesson,' said Miss Somers. 'Shall we try her?' continued she; 'Philip will, I dare say, take the Guinea hen back to Susan, if we desire it.'

'If you please, ma'am,' said Barbara, sullenly; 'I have nothing more to do with it.'

So the Guinea hen was delivered to Philip, who set off joyfully with his prize, and was soon in sight of farmer Price's cottage.

He stopped when he came to the door; he recollected Rose, and her generous friendship for Susan; he was determined, that she should have the pleasure of restoring the Guinea hen; he ran into the village, all the children who had given up their little purse on May-day were assembled on the play-green; they were delighted to see the Guinea hen once more---Philip took his pipe and tabor, and they marched in innocent triumph towards the white-washed cottage.

‘Let me come with you——let me come with you,’ said the butcher’s boy to Philip. ‘Stop one minute! my father has something to say to you.’

He darted into his father’s house. The little procession stopped, and in a few minutes, the bleating of a lamb was heard. Through a back passage, which led into the paddock behind the house, they saw the butcher leading a lamb.

‘It is Daisy!’ exclaimed Rose.——‘It’s Daisy!’ repeated all her companions. ‘Susan’s lamb! Susan’s lamb!’ and there was an universal shout of joy.

‘Well, for my part,’ said the good butcher, as soon as he could be heard, ‘For my part, I would not be so cruel as attorney Case for the whole world.---These poor brute beasts don’t know aforehand what’s going to happen to them; and as for dying, it’s what we must all do some time or another; but to keep wringing the hearts of the living, that have as much sense as one’s self, is what I call cruel; and is not this what attorney Case has been doing by poor Susan, and her whole family, ever since he took a spite against them? But, at any rate, here’s Susan’s lamb safe and sound; I’d have taken it back sooner, but I was off before day to the fair, and am but just come back; however, Daisy has been as well off in my paddock, as he would have been in the field by the water-side.’

The obliging shopkeeper, who shewed the pretty calicoes to Susan, was now at his door, and when he saw the lamb, heard that it was Susan’s, and learnt its history, he said that he would add his mite, and he gave the children some ends of narrow ribband, with which Rose decorated her friend’s lamb.

The pipe and tabor now once more began to play, and the procession moved on in joyful order, after giving the



sumare butcher three cheers.—Three cheers which were better deserved, than ‘loud huzzas’ usually are.

Susan was working in her arbour, with her little deal table before her; when she heard the sound of the music, she put down her work and listened; she saw the crowd of children coming nearer and nearer; they had closed round Daisy, so that she did not see it, but as they came up to the garden-gate she saw Rose beckon to her. ---Philip played as loud as he could, that she might not hear, till the proper moment, the bleating of the lamb.

Susan opened the garden-wicket, and at this signal the crowd divided, and the first thing that Susan saw in the midst of her taller friends was little smiling Mary, with the Guinea hen in her arms.

‘Come on! Come on!’ cried Mary, as Susan started with joyful surprise, ‘you have more to see.’

At this instant the music paused; Susan heard the bleating of the lamb, and scarcely daring to believe her senses, she pressed eagerly forward, and beheld poor Daisy!---she burst into tears.

‘I did not shed one tear when I parted with you, my dear little Daisy!’ said she; ‘it was for my father and mother; I would not have parted with you for any thing else in the whole world.---Thank you, thank you all,’ added she to her companions, who sympathized in her joy, even more than they had sympathized in her sorrow.---‘Now if my father was not to go away from us next week, and if my mother was quite stout, I should be the happiest person in the world!’

As Susan pronounced these words, a voice behind the little listening crowd cried, in a brutal tone, ‘Let us pass, if you please, you have no right to stop up the public road!’ This was the voice of attorney Case, who was returning with his daughter Barbara from his visit to the Abbey.---He saw the lamb, and tried to whistle as he passed on; Barbara also saw the Guinea hen, and turned her head another way, that she might avoid the contemptuous reproachful looks of those whom she only affected to despise. Even her new bonnet, in which she had expected to be so much admired, was now only serviceable to hide her face, and conceal her mortification.

‘I am glad she saw the Guinea hen,’ cried Rose, who now held it in her hands.

‘Yes,’ said Philip, ‘she’ll not forget May-day in a hurry.’

‘Nor I neither, I hope,’ said Susan, looking round upon her companions with a most affectionate smile, ‘I hope, whilst I live, I shall never forget your goodness to me last May-day. Now I’ve my pretty Guinea hen safe once more, I should think of returning your money.’

‘No! no! no!’ was the general cry. ‘We don’t want the money---keep it, keep it---you want it for your father.’

‘Well,’ said Susan, ‘I am not too proud to be obliged. I *will* keep your money for my father. Perhaps some time or other I may be able to earn---’

‘Oh,’ interrupted Philip, ‘don’t let us talk of earning, don’t let us talk to her of money now; she has not had time hardly to look at poor Daisy and her Guinea hen. ---Come, we had best go about our business, and let her have them all to herself.’

The crowd moved away in consequence of Philip’s considerate advice; but it was observed that he was the very last to stir from the garden-wicket himself. He stayed, first, to inform Susan, that it was Rose who tied the ribbands on Daisy’s head; then he stayed a little longer to let her into the history of the Guinea hen, and to tell her who it was, that brought the hen home from the Abbey.

Rose held the sieve, and Susan was feeding her long-lost favourite, whilst Philip leaned over the wicket prolonging his narration.

‘Now, my pretty Guinea hen, my naughty Guinea hen, that flew away from me, you shall never serve me so again---I must cut your nice wings, but I won’t hurt you.’

‘Take care,’ cried Philip, ‘you’d better, indeed you’d better let me hold her, whilst you cut her wings.’

When this operation was successfully performed, which it certainly could never have been, if Philip had not held the hen for Susan, he recollected that his mother had sent him with a message to Mrs. Price.

This message led to another quarter of an hour’s delay, for he had the whole history of the Guinea hen to tell over again to Mrs. Price, and the farmer himself

luckily came in whilst it was going on, so it was but civil to begin it afresh, and then the farmer was so rejoiced to see his Susan so happy again with her two little favourites, that he declared he must see Daisy fed himself, and Philip found that he was wanted to hold the jug full of milk, out of which farmer Price filled the pan for Daisy ; happy Daisy ! who lapped at his ease, whilst Susan caressed him, and thanked her fond father and her pleased mother.

‘ But, Philip,’ said Mrs. Price, ‘ I’ll hold the jug--- you’ll be late with your message to your mother ; we’ll not detain you any longer.’

Philip departed, and as he went out of the garden-wicket he looked up, and saw Bab and her maid Betty staring out of the window, as usual ; on this he immediately turned back to try whether he had shut the gate fast, lest the Guinea hen might stray out, and fall again into the hands of the enemy.

Miss Barbara, in the course of this day, had felt considerable mortification, but no contrition. She was vexed that her meanness was discovered, but she felt no desire to cure herself of any of her faults. The ball was still uppermost in her vain selfish soul.

‘ Well,’ said she, to her confidant Betty, ‘ you hear how things have turned out ; but if Miss Somers won’t think of asking me to go with her, I’ve a notion I know who will.---As papa says, it’s a good thing to have two strings to one’s bow.’

Now, some officers, who were quartered at Shrewsbury, had become acquainted with Mr. Case ; they had gotten into some quarrel with a tradesman in the town, and attorney Case had promised to bring them through the affair, as the man threatened to take the law of them. Upon the faith of this promise, and with the vain hope, that by civility they might dispose him to bring in a *reasonable* bill of costs, these officers sometimes invited Mr. Case to the mess, and one of them, who had lately been married, prevailed upon his bride *sometimes* to take a little notice of Miss Barbara. It was with this lady, that Miss Barbara now hoped to go to the harpers’ ball.

‘ The officers and Mrs. Strathspey, or more properly Mrs. Strathspey and the officers, are to breakfast here

to-morrow, do you know,' said Bab to Betty.---' One of them dined at the Abbey to-day, and told papa, they'd all come ; they are going out, on a party, somewhere into the country, and breakfast here in their way.---Pray, Betty, don't forget that Mrs. Strathspey can't breakfast without honey, I heard her say so myself.'

' Then, indeed,' said Betty, ' I'm afraid Mrs. Strathspey will be likely to go without her breakfast here, for not a spoonful of honey have we, let her long for it ever so much.'

' But, surely,' said Bab, ' we can contrive to get some honey in the neighbourhood.'

' There's none to be bought, as I know of,' said Betty.

' But is there none to be begged or borrowed,' said Bab, laughing ; ' do you forget Susan's beehive. Step over to her in the morning, with *my compliments*, and see what you can do---tell her it is for Mrs. Strathspey.'

In the morning Betty went with Miss Barbara's compliments to Susan, to beg some honey for Mrs. Strathspey, who could not breakfast without it.

Susan did not like to part with her honey, because her mother loved it, and she therefore gave Betty but a small quantity ; when Barbara saw how little Susan sent, she called her a *miser*, and said she *must* have some more for Mrs. Strathspey.

' I'll go myself and speak to her ; come you with me, Betty,' said the young lady, who found it at present convenient to forget her having declared, the day that she sucked up the broth, that she never would honour Susan with another visit.

' Susan,' said she, accosting the poor girl, whom she had done every thing in her power to injure, ' I must beg a little more honey from you for Mrs. Strathspey's breakfast. You know, on a particular occasion, such as this, neighbours must help one another.'

' To be sure they should,' added Betty.

Susan, though she was generous, was not weak ; she was willing to give to those she loved, but not disposed to let any thing be taken from her, or coaxed out of her, by those she had reason to despise. She civilly answered, ' that she was sorry she had no more honey to spare.' Barbara grew angry, and lost all command of herself.

when she saw that Susan, without regarding her reproaches, went on looking through the glass pane in the bee-hive.—‘I’ll tell you what, Susan Price,’ said she in a high tone, ‘the honey I *will* have, so you may as well give it to me by fair means—Yes or no?—Speak! will you give it me or not; will you give me that piece of the honeycomb that lies there?’

‘That bit of honeycomb is for my mother’s breakfast,’ said Susan, ‘I cannot give it you.’

‘Can’t you?’ said Bab; ‘then see if I don’t get it.’

She stretched across Susan for the honeycomb, which was lying by some rosemary leaves, that Susan had freshly gathered for her mother’s tea. Bab grasped, but at her first effort she reached only the rosemary; she made a second dart at the honeycomb, and in her struggle to obtain it, she overset the bee-hive. The bees swarmed about her—her maid Betty screamed, and ran away. Susan, who was sheltered by a laburnum-tree, called to Barbara, upon whom the black clusters of bees were now settling, and begged her to stand still, and not to beat them away. ‘If you stand quietly, you won’t be stung, perhaps.’ But instead of standing quietly, Bab buffeted, and stamped, and roared, and the bees stung her terribly; her arms and her face swelled in a frightful manner. She was helped home by poor Susan, and treacherous Mrs. Betty, who, now the mischief was done, thought only of exculpating herself to her master.

‘Indeed, Miss Barbara,’ said she, ‘this was quite wrong of you, to go and get yourself into such a scrape. I shall be turned away for it, you’ll see.’

‘I don’t care whether you are turned away or not,’ said Barbara, ‘I never felt such pain in my life. Can’t you do something for me. I don’t mind the pain either so much as being such a fright. Pray, how am I to be fit to be seen at breakfast by Mrs. Strathspey; and I suppose I can’t go to the ball either, to-morrow, after all!’

‘No,’ that you can’t expect to do, indeed,’ said Betty the comforter. ‘You need not think of balls, for those lumps and swellings won’t go off your face this week.—That’s not what pains me, but I’m thinking of what your papa will say to me, when he sees you, Miss.’

Whilst this amiable mistress and maid were in their ad-

versity, reviling one another, Susan, when she saw that she could be of no farther use, was preparing to depart, but at the house-door she was met by Mr. Case.

Mr. Case had revolved things in his mind, for this second visit at the Abbey pleased him as little as his first, from a few words Sir Arthur and Miss Somers dropped in speaking of Susan and farmer Price. Mr. Case began to fear, that he had mistaken his game in quarrelling with this family. The refusal of the present dwelt upon the attorney's mind, and he was aware, that if the history of Susan's lamb ever reached the Abbey, he was undone; he now thought, that the most prudent course he could possibly follow would be, to *hush up* matters with the *Prices* with all convenient speed. Consequently, when he met Susan at his door, he forced a gracious smile.

'How is your mother, Susan?' said he. 'Is there any thing in our house can be of service to her? I'm glad to see you here. Barbara! Barbara! Bab!' cried he; 'come down stairs, child, and speak to Susan Price.' And, as no Barbara answered, her father stalked up stairs directly, opened the door, and stood amazed at the spectacle of her swelled visage.

Betty instantly began to tell the story her own way. Bab contradicted her as fast as she spoke. The attorney turned the maid away upon the spot; and partly with real anger, and partly with politic affectation of anger, he demanded from his daughter, how she dared to treat Susan Price so ill; 'when she was so neighbourly and obliging as to give you some of her honey, couldn't you be content without seizing upon the honeycomb by force. This is scandalous behaviour, and what, I assure you, I can't countenance.'

Susan now interceded for Barbara; and the attorney, softening his voice, said that Susan was a great deal too good to her, 'as indeed you are, Susan,' added he, 'to every body. I forgive her for your sake.'

Susan courtesied, in great surprise, but her lamb could not be forgotten, and she left the attorney's house as soon as she could, to make her mother's rosemary-tea for breakfast.

Mr. Case saw that Susan was not so simple as to be taken in by a few fair words. His next attempt was to conciliate farmer Price; the farmer was a blunt honest man, and his countenance remained inflexibly contemptuous, when the attorney addressed him in his softest tone.

So stood matters the day of the long-expected harpers' ball.—Miss Barbara Case, stung by Susan's bees, could not after all her manœuvres, go with Mrs. Strathspey to the ball.

The ball-room was filled early in the evening; there was a numerous assembly; the harpers, who contended for the prize, were placed under the music-gallery at the lower end of the room;—amongst them was our old blind friend, who, as he was not so well clad as his competitors, seemed to be disdained by many of the spectators.—Six ladies and six gentlemen were now appointed, to be judges of the performance. They were seated in a semicircle, opposite to the harpers. The Miss Somerses, who were fond of music, were amongst the ladies in the semicircle, and the prize was lodged in the hands of Sir Arthur. There was now silence. The first harp sounded, and as each musician tried his skill, the audience seemed to think, that each deserved the prize. The old blind man was the last; he tuned his instrument, and such a simple pathetic strain was heard as touched every heart. All were fixed in delighted attention, and when the music ceased, the silence for some moments continued.—The silence was followed by an universal buz of applause. The judges were unanimous in their opinions, and it was declared, that the old blind harper, who played the last, deserved the prize.

The simple, pathetic air, which won the suffrages of the whole assembly, was his own composition; he was pressed to give the words belonging to the music, and at last he modestly offered to repeat them, as he could not see to write. Miss Somers's ready pencil was instantly produced, and the old harper dictated the words of his ballad, which he called—'*Susan's Lamentation for her Lamb.*'

Miss Somers looked at her brother from time to time, as she wrote, and Sir Arthur as soon as the old man had finished, took him aside and asked him some questions,

which brought the whole history of Susan's lamb, and of attorney Case's cruelty, to light.

The attorney himself was present, when the harper began to dictate his ballad; his colour, as sir Arthur steadily looked at him, varied continually; till at length, when he heard the words, 'Susan's lamentation for her lamb,' he suddenly shrunk back, skulked through the crowd, and disappeared. We shall not follow him, we had rather follow our old friend the victorious harper.

No sooner had he received the ten guineas, his well-merited prize, than he retired into a small room belonging to the people of the house, asked for pen, ink, and paper, and dictated, in a low voice, to his boy, who was a tolerably good scribe, a letter, which he ordered him to put directly into the Shrewsbury post-office; the boy ran with the letter to the post-office, he was but just in time, for the postman's horn was sounding.

The next morning, when farmer Price, his wife, and Susan, were sitting together, reflecting that his week's leave of absence was nearly at an end, and that the money was not yet made up for John Simpson, the substitute, a knock was heard at the door, and the person, who usually delivered the letters in the village, put a letter into Susan's hand, saying, 'a penny, if you please—here's a letter for your father.'

'For me!' said farmer Price, 'here's the penny then; but who can it be from I wonder; who can think of writing to me, in this world?' He tore open the letter, but the hard name at the bottom of the page puzzled him—'*your obliged friend—Llewellyn.*' 'And what's this said he, opening a paper that was enclosed in the letter, 'it's a song, seemingly; it must be somebody that has a mind to make an April fool of me.'

'But it is not April, it is May, father,' said Susan.

'Well, let us read the letter, and we shall come at the truth—all in good time.'—

Farmer Price sat down in his own chair, for he could not read entirely to his satisfaction in any other, and read as follows:

'My worthy friend,

'I am sure you will be glad to hear, that I have had good success this night, I have won the ten guinea prize,



and for that I am in a great measure indebted to your sweet daughter Susan, as you will see by a little ballad I enclose for her.—Your hospitality to me has afforded me an opportunity of learning some of your family history. You do not, I hope, forget that I was present, when you were counting the treasure in Susan's little purse, and that I heard for what purpose it was all destined.—You have not, I know, yet made up the full sum for your substitute, John Simpson, therefore do me the favour to use the five-guinea banknote, which you will find within the ballad. You shall not find me as hard a creditor as attorney Case. Pay me the money at your own convenience; if it is never convenient to you to pay it, I shall never ask it. I shall go my rounds again through this country, I believe, about this time next year, and will call to see how you do, and to play the new tune for Susan and the dear little boys.

‘I should just add, to set your heart at rest about the money, that it does not distress me at all to lend it to you; I am not quite so poor as I appear to be; but it is my humour to go about as I do; I see more of the world under my tattered garb than, perhaps, I should ever see in a better dress. There are many of my profession, who are of the same mind as myself, in this respect, and we are glad, when it lies in our way to do any kindness to such a worthy family as yours.—So fare ye well.

Your obliged friend,

LLEWELLYN.’

Susan now, by her father's desire, opened the ballad, he picked up the five-guinea banknote, whilst she read with surprise, ‘Susan's lamentation for her lamb.’ Her mother leaned over her shoulder to read the words, but they were interrupted, before they had finished the first stanza, by another knock at the door. It was not the postman with another letter, it was Sir Arthur and his sisters.

They came with an intention, which they were much disappointed to find that the old harper had rendered vain—they came to lend the farmer and his good family the money, to pay for his substitute.

‘But, since we are here,’ said Sir Arthur, ‘let me do my own business, which I had like to have forgotten.

Mr. Price, will you come out with me, and let me shew you a piece of your land, through which I want to make a road. Look there,' said Sir Arthur, pointing to the spot, 'I am laying out a ride round my estate, and that bit of land of yours stops me.'

'Why so, Sir,' said Price, 'the land's mine, to be sure, for that matter; but I hope you don't look upon me to be that sort of person, that would be stiff about a trifle, or so.'

'Why,' said Sir Arthur, 'I have heard you were a litigious, pig headed fellow; but you do not seem to deserve this character.'

'I hope not, Sir,' said the farmer; 'but about the matter of the land, I don't want to take no advantage of your wishing for it, you are welcome to it, and I leave it to you to find me out another bit of land convenient to me, that will be worth neither more nor less, or else to make up the value to me some way or other. I need say no more about it.'

'I hear something,' continued Sir Arthur, after a short silence, 'I hear something, Mr. Price, of a *flaw* in your lease. I would not speak to you of it whilst we were bargaining about your land, lest I should overawe you; but tell me what is this *flaw*?'

'In truth, and the truth is the fittest thing to be spoken at all times,' said the farmer, 'I didn't know myself what a *flaw*, as they call it, meant, till I heard of the word from attorney Case; and I take it a *flaw* is neither more nor less than a mistake, as one should say; now, by reason, a man does not make a mistake on purpose; it seems to me to be the fair thing, that if a man finds out his mistake, he might set it right; but attorney Case says, this is not law, and I've no more to say. The man who drew up my lease made a mistake, and if I must suffer for it I must,' said the farmer. 'However I can shew you, Sir Arthur, just for my own satisfaction and yours, a few lines of a memorandum on a slip of paper, which was given me by your relation, the gentleman who lived here before, and let me my farm. You'll see, by that bit of paper, what was meant; but the attorney says, the paper's not worth a button in a court of justice, and I

don't understand these things. All I understand is the common honesty of the matter. I've no more to say.'

'This attorney, whom you speak of so often,' said Sir Arthur, 'you seem to have some quarrel with him. Now, would you tell me frankly, what is the matter between——'

'The matter between us then,' said Price, 'is a little bit of ground, not worth much, that there is open to the lane at the end of Mr. Case's garden, Sir, and he wanted to take it in. Now I told him my mind, that it belonged to the parish, and that I never would willingly give my consent to his cribbing it in that way. Sir, I was the more loth to see it shut into his garden, which moreover is large enow of all conscience without it, because you must know, Sir Arthur, the children in our village are fond of making a little play-green of it, and they have a custom of meeting on May-day at a hawthorn that stands in the middle of it, and altogether I was very looth to see 'em turned out of it by those who had no right.'

'Let us go and see this nook,' said Sir Arthur; 'it is not far off, is it?'

'Oh no, Sir, just hard by here.'

When they got to the ground, Mr. Case, who saw them walking together, was in a hurry to join them, that he might put a stop to any explanations. Explanations were things of which he had a great dread, but fortunately he was upon this occasion a little too late.

'Is this the nook in dispute,' said Sir Arthur.

'Yes; this is the whole thing,' said Price.

'Why, Sir Arthur, don't let us talk any more about it,' said the politic attorney, with an assumed air of generosity, 'let it belong to whom it will, I give it up to you.'

'So great a lawyer, Mr. Case, as you are,' replied Sir Arthur, 'must know, that a man cannot give up that to which he has no legal title; and in this case, it is impossible that, with the best intentions to oblige me in the world, you can give up this bit of land to me, because it is mine already, as I can convince you effectually, by a map of the adjoining land, which I have fortunately safe amongst my papers. This piece of ground belonged to the farm on the opposite side of the road, and it was cut off when the lane was made.'

‘Very possibly, I dare say you are quite correct. I must know best,’ said the attorney, trembling for the agency.

‘Then,’ said Sir Arthur, ‘Mr. Price, you will observe, that I now promise this little green to the children, for a play-ground, and I hope they may gather hawthorn many a May-day at this their favourite bush.’

Mr. Price bowed low, which he seldom did, even when he received a favour himself.

‘And now, Mr. Case,’ said Sir Arthur, turning to the attorney, who did not know which way to look, ‘you sent me a lease to look over.’

‘Ye—ye—yes,’ stammered Mr. Case. ‘I thought it my duty to do so, not out of any malice or ill-will to this good man.’

‘You have done him no injury,’ said Sir Arthur coolly.—‘I am ready to make him a new lease, whenever he pleases, of his farm, and I shall be guided by a memorandum of the original bargain, which he has in his possession. I hope I never shall take an unfair advantage of any one.’

‘Heaven forbid, Sir,’ said the attorney, sanctifying his face, ‘that I should suggest the taking an *unfair* advantage of any man, rich or poor—but to break a bad lease, is not taking an unfair advantage.’

‘You really think so?’ said Sir Arthur.

‘Certainly I do, and I hope I have not hazarded your good opinion, by speaking my mind concerning the flaw, so plainly. I always understood, that there could be nothing ungentlemanlike in the way of business, in taking advantage of a flaw in a lease.’

‘Now,’ said Sir Arthur, ‘you have pronounced judgment, *undesignedly*, in your own case.—You intended to send me this poor man’s lease, but your son, by some mistake, brought me your own, and I have discovered a fatal error in it.’

‘A fatal error!’ said the alarmed attorney.

‘Yes, Sir,’ said Sir Arthur, pulling the lease out of his pocket; ‘here it is—you will observe, that it is neither signed nor sealed by the grantor.’

‘But you won’t take advantage of me surely, Sir Arthur,’ said Mr. Case, forgetting his own principles.

‘I shall not take advantage of you as you would have taken of this honest man. In both cases I shall be guided by memorandums which I have in my possession. I shall not, Mr. Case, defraud you of one shilling of your property. I am ready at a fair valuation to pay the exact value of your house and land, but, upon this condition, that you quit the parish within one month.’

Attorney Case submitted, for he knew that he could not legally resist.—He was glad to be let off so easily, and he bowed, and sneaked away, secretly comforting himself with the hope, that when they came to the valuation of the house and land, he should be the gainer, perhaps, of a few guineas ; his reputation he justly held very cheap.

‘You are a scholar, you write a good hand, you can keep accounts, cannot you?’ said Sir Arthur to Mr. Price, as they walked home towards his cottage. ‘I think I saw a bill of your little daughter’s drawing-out the other day, which was very neatly written? Did you teach her to write?’

‘No, Sir,’ said Price, ‘I can’t say I did *that*, for she mostly taught it herself, but I taught her a little arithmetic, as far as I knew, on our winter nights, when I had nothing better to do.’

‘Your daughter shews that she has been well taught,’ said Sir Arthur, ‘and her good conduct and good character speak strongly in favour of her parents.’

‘You are very good, very good indeed, Sir, to speak in this sort of way,’ said the delighted father.

‘But I mean to do more than *pay you with words*,’ said Sir Arthur. ‘You are attached to your own family, perhaps you may become attached to me, when you come to know me, and we shall have frequent opportunities of judging of one another. I want no agent to squeeze my tenants, or to do my dirty work. I only want a steady, intelligent, honest man, like you, to collect my rents, and I hope, Mr. Price, you will have no objection to the employment.’

‘I hope, Sir,’ said Price, with joy and gratitude glowing in his honest countenance, ‘that you’ll never have no cause to repent your goodness.’

‘And what are my sisters about here?’ said Sir Arthur, entering the cottage, and going behind his sisters,

who were busily engaged in measuring an extremely pretty coloured calico.

‘It is for Susan! my dear brother,’ said they.

‘I knew she did not keep that guinea for herself,’ said Miss Somers; ‘I have just prevailed upon her mother, to tell me what became of it. Susan gave it to her father—but she must not refuse a gown of our choosing this time, and I am sure she will not, because her mother, I see, likes it.—And Susan, I hear, that, instead of being Queen of the May this year, you were sitting in your sick mother’s room. Your mother has a little colour in her cheeks now.’

‘Oh, ma’am,’ interrupted Mrs. Price, ‘I’m quite well—joy, I think, has made me quite well.’

‘Then,’ said Miss Somers, ‘I hope you will be able to come out on your daughter’s birth-day, which I hear is the 25th of this month.—Make haste and get quite well before that day, for my brother intends, that all the lads and lasses of the village shall have a dance on Susan’s birth-day.’

‘Yes,’ said Sir Arthur; ‘and I hope, on that day, Susan, you will be very happy with your little friends upon their play-green. I shall tell them, that it is your good conduct, which has obtained it for them; and if you have any thing to ask, any little favour for any of your companions, which we can grant, now ask, Susan; these ladies look as if they would not refuse you any thing that is reasonable; and I think you look as if you would not ask any thing unreasonable.’

‘Sir,’ said Susan, after consulting her mother’s eyes, ‘there is, to be sure, a favour I should like to ask, it is for Rose.’

‘Well, I don’t know who Rose is,’ said Sir Arthur, smiling; ‘but go on.’

‘Ma’am, you have seen her, I believe; she is a very good girl indeed,’ said Mrs. Price.

‘And works very neatly indeed,’ continued Susan, eagerly, to Miss Somers, ‘and she and her mother heard you were looking out for one to wait upon you.’

‘Say no more,’ said Miss Somers, ‘your wish is granted; tell Rose to come to the Abbey to-morrow morning, or rather come with her yourself, for our housekeeper,

I know, wants to talk to you, about a certain cake. She wishes, Susan, that you should be the maker of the cake for the dance, and she has good things ready looked out for it already, I know. It must be large enough for every body to have a slice, and the housekeeper will ice it for you. I only hope your cake will be as good as your bread.—Fare ye well.'

How happy are those who bid farewell to a whole family, silent with gratitude, who will bless them aloud when they are far out of hearing!

'How do I wish, now,' said farmer Price, 'and it's almost a sin for one, that has had such a power of favours done him, to wish for any thing more; but how I *do* wish, wife, that our good friend the harper, Susan, was only here at this time, being it would do his old warm heart good. Well, the best of it is, we shall be able, next year, when he comes his rounds, to pay him his money with thanks, being all the time, and for ever, as much obliged to him as if we kept it, and wanted it as badly as we did, when he gave it so handsome.—I long, so I do, to see him in this house again, drinking, as he did, just in this spot, a glass of Susan's mead, to her very good health.'

'Yes,' said Susan, 'and the next time he comes, I can give him one of my Guinea hen's eggs, and I shall shew my lamb Daisy.'

'True, love,' said her mother, 'and he will play that tune, and sing that pretty ballad—where is it, for I have not finished it.'

'Rose ran away with it, mother; and I'll step after her and bring it back to you this minute,' said Susan.

Susan found her friend Rose at the hawthorn, in the midst of a crowded circle of her companions, to whom she was reading 'Susan's lamentation for her lamb.'

'The words are something—but the tune—the tune—I must have the tune,' cried Philip. 'I'll ask my mother to ask Sir Arthur, to try and rout out which way that good old man went after the ball; and if he's above ground we'll have him back by Susan's birth-day, and he shall sit here, just exactly here, by this our bush, and he shall play—I mean if he pleases—that there tune for us, and I shall learn it—I mean if I can—in a minute.'

The good news, that farmer Price was to be employed to collect the rents, and that attorney Case was to leave the parish in a month, soon spread over the village. Many came out of their houses to have the pleasure of hearing the joyful tidings confirmed by Susan herself; the crowd on the play-green increased every minute.

‘Yes,’ cried the triumphant Philip, ‘I tell you it’s all true, every word of it, Susan’s too modest to say it herself—but I tell ye all, Sir Arthur gave us this play-green for ever, on account of her being so good.’

You see at last, attorney Case, with all his cunning, has not proved a match for ‘Simple Susan.’



## THE BASKET-WOMAN.



‘Toute leur étude étoit de se complaire et de s’entr’aider.’  
PAUL & VIRGINIE.

Their whole study was how to please and to help one another.

AT the foot of a steep, slippery, white hill, near Dunstable in Bedfordshire, called Chalk Hill, there is a hut, or rather a hovel, which travellers could scarcely suppose could be inhabited, if they did not see the smoke rising from its peaked roof. An old woman lived in this hovel, and with her a little boy and girl, the children of a beggar, who died and left these orphans perishing with hunger: they thought themselves very happy the first time the good old woman took them into her hut; bid them warm themselves at her small fire, and gave them a crust of mouldy bread to eat; she had not much to give; but what she had she gave with good-will. She was very kind to these poor children, and worked hard at her spinning-wheel, and at her knitting, to support her-

self and them. She earned money also in another way: she used to follow all the carriages as they went up Chalk Hill; and when the horses stopped to take breath, or to rest themselves, she put stones behind the carriage wheels, to prevent them from rolling backwards down the steep, slippery hill.

The little boy and girl loved to stand beside the good-natured old woman's spinning-wheel, when she was spinning, and to talk to her. At these times she taught them something, which, she said, she hoped they would remember all their lives: she explained to them what is meant by telling the truth, and what it is to be honest; she taught them to dislike idleness, and to wish that they could be useful.

One evening, as they were standing beside her, the little boy said to her, 'Grandmother,'—for that was the name by which she liked that these children should call her—'Grandmother, how often you are forced to get up from your spinning-wheel, and to follow the chaises and coaches up that steep hill, to put stones under the wheels, to hinder them from rolling back: the people who are in the carriages give you a half-penny or a penny for doing this, don't they?'—'Yes, child.'—'But it is very hard work for you to go up and down that hill; you often say that you are tired, and then you know that you cannot spin all that time; now if we might go up the hill, and put the stones behind the wheels, you could sit still at your work; and would not the people give us the half-pence? and could not we bring them all to you? Do, pray dear grandmother, try us for one day—To-morrow, will you?'—'Yes,' said the old woman, 'I will try what you can do; but I must go up the hill along with you for the two or three first times, for fear you should get yourselves hurt.' So the next day the little boy and girl went with their grandmother, as they used to call her, up the steep hill; and she shewed the boy how to prevent the wheels from rolling back, by putting stones behind them; and she said, 'This is called scotching the wheels;' and she took off the boy's hat, and gave it to the little girl, to hold up to the carriage windows, ready for the half-pence. When she thought that the children knew how to manage by themselves, she left them, and

returned to her spinning-wheel. A great many carriages happened to go by this day, and the little girl received a great many half-pence: she carried them all in her brother's hat to her grandmother, in the evening: and the old woman smiled, and thanked the children; she said that they had been useful to her, and that her spinning had gone on finely, because she had been able to sit still at her wheel all day—'But Paul, my boy,' said she, 'what is the matter with your hand?'

'Only a pinch, only one pinch that I got, as I was putting a stone behind the wheel of a chaise: it does not hurt me much, grandmother; and I've thought of a good thing for to-morrow; I shall never be hurt again, if you will only be so good as to give me the old handle of the broken crutch, grandmother, and the block of wood that lies in the chimney-corner, and that is of no use: I'll make it of some use, if I may have it.'—'Take it then dear,' said the old woman; 'and you'll find the handle of the broken crutch under my bed.'

Paul went to work immediately, and fastened one end of the pole into the block of wood, so as to make something like a dry rubbing brush. 'Look, grandmamma, look at my *scotcher*: I call this thing my *scotcher*,' said Paul, 'because I shall always scotch the wheels with it: I shall never pinch my fingers again; my hands, you see, will be safe at the end of this long stick; and, sister Anne, you need not be at the trouble of carrying any more stones after me up the hill; we shall never want stones any more; my *scotcher* will do without any thing else, I hope. I wish it was morning, and that a carriage would come, that I might run up the hill and try my *scotcher*.'—'And I wish that as many chaises may go by to-morrow as there did to day, and that we may bring you as many half-pence too, grandmother,' said the little girl. 'So do I, my dear Anne,' said the old woman; 'for I mean that you and your brother shall have all the money that you get to-morrow; you may buy some gingerbread for yourselves, or some of these ripe plums, that you saw at the fruit-stall, the other day, which is just going into Dunstable. I told you then, that I could not afford to buy such things for you; but now, that you can earn half-pence for yourselves, children, it is fair you should taste a ripe

plum and a bit of gingerbread for once in your lives, and away, dears.'

'We'll bring some of the gingerbread home to her, shan't we, brother?' whispered little Anne. The morning came; but no carriages were heard, though Paul and his sister had risen at five o'clock, that they might be sure to be ready for early travellers. Paul kept his scotcher poised upon his shoulder, and watched eagerly at his station at the bottom of the hill: he did not wait long before a carriage came. He followed it up the hill; and the instant the postillion called to him, and bid him stop the wheels, he put his scotcher behind them, and found that it answered the purpose perfectly well. Many carriages went by this day; and Paul and Anne received a great many half-pence from the travellers. When it grew dusk in the evening, Anne said to her brother—'I don't think any more carriages will come by to-day: let us count the half-pence, and carry them home now to grandmother.'

'No not yet,' answered Paul, 'let them alone—let them lie still in the hole where I have put them: I dare say more carriages will come by before it is quite dark, and then we shall have more half-pence. Paul had taken the half-pence out of his hat, and he had put them into a hole in the high bank by the road-side; and Anne said, that she would not meddle with them, and that she would wait till her brother liked to count them; and Paul said, 'If you will stay and watch here, I will go and gather some blackberries for you in the hedge in yonder field; stand you here-about half-way up the hill; and the moment you see any carriage coming along the road, run as fast as you can, and call me.'

Anne waited a long time; or what she thought a long time; and she saw no carriage; and she trailed her brother's scotcher up and down till she was tired; then she stood still, and looked again; and she saw no carriage; so she went sorrowfully into the field, and to the hedge where her brother was gathering blackberries, and she said, 'Paul, I'm sadly tired; *sadly tired!*' said she, 'and my eyes are quite strained with looking for chaises; no more chaises will come to-night; and your scotcher is lying there, of no use, upon the ground. Have not I

waited long enough for to-day, Paul?'—'O, no,' said Paul, 'here are some blackberries for you; you had better wait a little bit longer; perhaps a carriage might go by whilst you are standing here talking to me.' Anne, who was of a very obliging temper, and who liked to do what she was asked to do, went back to the place where the scotcher lay; and scarcely had she reached the spot, when she heard the noise of a carriage. She ran to call her brother; and, to their great joy, they now saw four chaises coming towards them. Paul, as soon as they went up the hill, followed with his scotcher; first he scotched the weels of one carriage, then of another; and Anne was so much delighted with observing how well the scotcher stopped the wheels, and how much better it was than stones, that she forgot to go and hold her brother's hat to the travellers for half-pence, till she was roused by the voice of a little rosy girl, who was looking out of the window of one of the chaises. 'Come close to the chaise door,' said the little girl, 'here are come half-pence for you.'

Anne held the hat; and she afterwards went on to the other carriages; money was thrown to her from each of them; and when they had all gotten safely to the top of the hill, she and her brother sat down upon a large stone by the road-side, to count their treasure. First they began by counting what was in the hat—'One, two, three, and four half-pence.'

'But O, brother, look at this!' exclaimed Anne; 'this is not the same as the other half-pence.'

'No, indeed, it is not,' cried Paul; 'it is no half-penny; it is a guinea, a bright golden guinea!'—'Is it?' said Anne, who had never seen a guinea in her life before, and who did not know its value; 'and will it do as well as a half-penny to buy gingerbread? I'll run to the fruit-stall, and ask the woman; shall I?'

'No, no,' said Paul, 'you need not ask any woman, or any body but me; I can tell you all about it, as well as any body in the whole world.'

'The whole world! O, Paul, you forget!—not so well as my grandmother.'

'Why, not so well as my grandmother, perhaps; but, Anne, I can tell you, that you must not talk yourself, Anne; but you must listen to me quietly, or else you

won't understand what I am going to tell you; for I can assure you, that I don't think I quite understood it myself, Anne, the first time my grandmother told it to me, though I stood stock still, listening my best.'

Prepared by this speech to hear something very difficult to be understood, Anne, looked very grave; and her brother explained to her, that, with a guinea, she might buy two hundred and fifty-two times as many plums as she could get for a penny.

'Why, Paul, you know the fruit-woman said she would give us a dozen plums for a penny. Now for this little guinea would she give us two hundred and fifty-two dozen?'

'If she has so many, and if we like to have so many, to be sure she will,' said Paul; 'but I think we should not like to have two hundred and fifty-two dozen of plums; we could not eat such a number.'

'But we could give some of them to my grandmother,' said Anne.

'But still there would be too many for her, and for us too,' said Paul; 'and when we had eaten the plums, there would be an end of all the pleasure; but now, I'll tell you what I am thinking of, Anne, that we may buy something for my grandmother, that would be very useful to her indeed, with this guinea; something that would last a great while.'

'What, brother? what sort of thing?'

'Something that she said she wanted very much last winter, when she was so ill of the rheumatism;—something that she said yesterday when you were making her bed, she wished she might be able to buy before next winter.'

'I know! I know what you mean,' said Anne, 'a blanket; O, yes, Paul, that will be much better than plums; do let us buy a blanket for her; how glad she will be to see it.—I will make her bed with the new blanket, and then bring her to look at it.—But, Paul, how shall we buy a blanket? Where are blankets to be got?'

'Leave that to me, I'll manage that—I know where blankets are to be got, I saw one hanging out of a shop the day I went last to Dunstable.'

'You have seen a great many things at Dunstable, brother.'

‘Yes, a great many; but I never saw any thing there, or any where else, that I wished for half so much as I did for that blanket for my grandmother.—Do you remember how she used to shiver with the cold last winter?—I’ll buy the blanket to-morrow, I’m going to Dunstable with her spinning.’

‘And you’ll bring the blanket to me, and I shall make the bed very neatly, that will be all right! all happy!’ said Anne, clapping her hands.

‘But stay! hush! don’t clap your hands so, Anne; it will not be all happy, I’m afraid,’ said Paul, and his countenance changed, and he looked very grave.—‘It will not be all right, I’m afraid, for there is one thing we have neither of us thought of, but what we ought to think about. We cannot buy the blanket, I’m afraid.’

‘Why Paul? why?’

‘Because I don’t think this guinea is honestly ours.’

‘Nay, brother, but I’m sure it is honestly ours; it was given to us, and grandmother said all that was given to us to-day was to be our own.’

‘But who gave it to you, Anne?’

‘Some of the people in those chaises, Paul; I don’t know which of them, but I dare say it was the little rosy girl.’

‘No,’ said Paul, ‘for when she called you to the chaise door, she said, ‘here’s some half-pence for you.’ Now, if she gave you the guinea, she must have given it to you by mistake.’

‘Well, but perhaps some of the people in the other chaises gave it to me, and did not give it to me by mistake, Paul. There was a gentleman reading in one of the chaises, and a lady who looked very good-naturedly at me, and then the gentleman put down his book, and put his head out of the window, and looked at your scotcher, brother, and he asked me, if that was your own making? and when I said, yes, and that I was your sister, he smiled at me, and put his hand into his waistcoat pocket, and threw a handful of half-pence into the hat, and I dare say he gave us the guinea along with them, because he liked your scotcher so much.’

‘Why,’ said Paul, ‘that might be to be sure, but I wish I was quite certain of it.’

‘Then, as we are not quite certain, had not we best

go and ask my grandmother what she thinks about it?’

Paul thought this was excellent advice, and he was not a silly boy, who did not like to follow good advice: he went with his sister directly to his grandmother, shewed her the guinea, and told her how they came by it.

‘My dear honest children,’ said she, ‘I am very glad you told me all this; I am very glad that you did not buy either the plums or the blanket with this guinea; I’m sure it is not honestly ours; those who threw it to you, gave it by mistake, I warrant; and what I would have you to do is to go to Dunstable, and try if you can, at either of the inns, find out the person who gave it to you. It is now so late in the evening, that perhaps the travellers will sleep at Dunstable, instead of going on the next stage; and it is likely, that whosoever gave you a guinea instead of a half-penny, has found out their mistake by this time. All you can do, is, to go and inquire for the gentleman who was reading in the chaise.’—

‘O!’ interrupted Paul, ‘I know a good way of finding him out; I remember it was a dark green chaise with red wheels: and I remember I read the inn-keeper’s name upon the chaise, ‘*John Nelson.*’ (I am much obliged to you for teaching me to read, grandmother.) You told me yesterday, grandmother, that the names written upon the chaises are the names of the inn-keepers to whom they belong. I read the name of the inn-keeper upon that chaise: it was John Nelson. So Anne and I will go to both the inns in Dunstable, and try to find out this chaise——John Nelson’s——Come, Anne, let us set out before it gets quite dark.’

Anne and her brother passed with great courage the tempting stall, that was covered with gingerbread and ripe plums, and pursued their way steadily through the street of Dunstable; but Paul, when he came to the shop where he had seen the blanket, stopped for a moment, and said, ‘It is a great pity, Anne, that the guinea is not ours; however, we are doing what is honest, and that is a comfort.—Here, we must go through this gate-way into the inn-yard; we are come to the Dun Cow.’

‘Cow!’ said Anne, ‘I see no cow.’

‘Look up, and you’ll see the cow over your head,’ said Paul—‘the sign—the picture.—Come, never mind look-



ing at it now: I want to find out the green chaise that has John Nelson's name upon it.'

Paul pushed forward, through a crowded passage, till he got into the inn-yard; there was a great noise and bustle, the hostlers were carrying in luggage; the postillions were rubbing down their horses, or rolling the chaises into the coach-house.

'What now? What business have you here, pray?' said a waiter, who almost ran over Paul, as he was crossing the yard in a great hurry to get some empty bottles from the bottle-rack.—'You've no business here, crowding up the yard; walk off, young gentleman, if you please.'

'Pray give me leave, Sir,' said Paul, 'to stay a few minutes, to look amongst these chaises for one dark green chaise with red wheels, that has Mr. John Nelson's name written upon it.'

'What's that he says about a dark green chaise,' said one of the postillions.

'What should such a one as he is, know about chaises,' interrupted the hasty waiter; and he was going to turn Paul out of the yard; but the hostler caught hold of his arm, and said, 'May be the child *has* some business here; let's know what he has to say for himself.'

The waiter was at this instant luckily obliged to leave them to attend the bell; and Paul told his business to the hostler, who, as soon as he saw the guinea and heard the story, shook Paul by the hand and said, 'Stand steady, my honest lad; I'll find the chaise for you, if it is to be found here; but John Nelson's chaises almost always drive to the Black Bull.'

After some difficulty, the green chaise with John Nelson's name upon it, and the postillion who drove that chaise, were found; and the postillion told Paul, that he was just going into the parlour to the gentleman he had driven, to be paid, and that he would carry the guinea with him.

'No,' said Paul, 'we should like to give it back ourselves.'

'Yes,' said the hostler, 'that they have a right to do.'

The postillion made no reply, but looked vexed, and went towards the house desiring the children would wait in the passage till his return.

In the passage there was standing a decent, clean, good-natured-looking woman, with two huge straw bas-

kets on each side of her. One of the baskets stood a little in the way of the entrance. A man who was pushing his way in, and carried in his hand a string of dead larks hung to a pole, impatient at being stopped, kicked down the straw basket ; and all its contents were thrown out : bright straw hats and boxes, and slippers, were all thrown in disorder upon the dirty ground.

‘ O, they will be trampled upon ! they will be all spoiled ! ’ exclaimed the woman to whom they belonged.

‘ We’ll help you to pick them up, if you will let us,’ cried Paul and Anne ; and they immediately ran to her assistance.

When the things were all safe in the basket again, the children expressed a great desire to know how such beautiful things could be made of straw ; but the woman had not time to answer them, before the postillion came out of the parlour, and with him a gentleman’s servant, who came to Paul, and, clapping him upon the back, said, ‘ So, my little chap, I gave you a guinea for a half-penny, I hear ; and I understand you’ve brought it back again—that’s right—give me hold of it.’

‘ No, brother,’ said Anne : ‘ this is not the gentleman that was reading.’

‘ Pooh, child, I came in Mr. Nelson’s green chaise. Here’s the postillion can tell you so. I and my master came in that chaise. It was my master that was reading, as you say ; and it was he that threw the money out to you : he is going to bed ; he is tired, and can’t see you himself : he desires that you’ll give me the guinea.’

Paul was too honest himself to suspect, that this man was telling him a falsehood ; and he now readily produced his bright guinea, and delivered it into the servant’s hands.

‘ Here’s sixpence a piece for you, children,’ said he, ‘ and good night to you.’—He pushed them towards the door ; but the basket-woman whispered to them as they went out, ‘ Wait in the street till I come to you.’

‘ Pray, Mrs. Landlady,’ cried this gentleman’s servant, addressing himself to the landlady, who just then came out of a room where some company were at supper, ‘ Pray, Mrs. Landlady, please to let me have roasted larks for my supper. You are famous for larks at Dunstable, and I make it a rule to taste the best of every

thing, wherever I go ; and, waiter, let me have a bottle of claret—Do you hear ?’

‘ Larks and claret for his supper !’ said the basket-woman to herself, as she looked at him from head to foot. The postillion was still waiting, as if to speak to him ; and she observed them afterwards whispering and laughing together. ‘ *No bad hit,*’ was a sentence which the servant pronounced several times.

Now it occurred to the basket-woman, that this man had cheated the children out of the guinea to pay for the larks and claret ; and she thought that perhaps she could discover the truth. She waited quietly in the passage.

‘ Waiter !—Joe ! Joe !’ cried the landlady, ‘ why don’t you carry in the sweetmeat puffs and the tarts here to the company in the best parlour.’

‘ Coming, ma’am,’ answered the waiter ; and with a large dish of tarts and puffs the waiter came from the bar ; the landlady threw open the door of the best parlour, to let him in ; and the basket-woman had now a full view of a large cheerful company ; and amongst them several children sitting round a supper-table.

‘ Aye,’ whispered the landlady, as the door closed after the waiter and the tarts, ‘ there are customers enough, I warrant, for you in that room, if you had but the luck to be called in. Pray what would you have the conscience, I wonder now, to charge me for these here half dozen little mats, to put under my dishes ?’

‘ A trifle, ma’am,’ said the basket-woman : she let the landlady have the mats cheap ; and the landlady then declared she would step in, and see if the company in the best parlour had done supper—‘ When they come to their wine,’ added she, ‘ I’ll speak a good word for you, and get you called in afore the children are sent to bed.’

The landlady, after the usual speech of ‘ *I hope the supper and every thing is to your liking, ladies and gentlemen,*’ began with ‘ If any of the young gentlemen or ladies would have a *cur’osity* to see any of our famous Dunstable straw-work, there’s a decent body without, would, I dare to say, be proud to shew them her pin-cushion-boxes, and her baskets and slippers, and her other *cur’osities.*’

The eyes of the children all turned towards their mo-

ther; their mother smiled, and immediately their father called in the basket-woman, and desired her to produce her *curiosities*.

The children gathered round her large pannier as it opened; but they did not touch any of her things.

'O, papa!' cried a little rosy girl, 'here are a pair of straw slippers, that would just fit you, I think; but would not straw shoes wear out very soon? and would not they let in the wet?'

'Yes, my dear,' said her father, but these slippers are meant—for powdering slippers, Miss,' interrupted the basket-woman.

'To wear when people are powdering their hair,' continued the gentleman, 'that they may not spoil their other shoes.'

'And will you buy them, papa?'

'No, I cannot indulge myself,' said her father, 'in buying them now; I must make amends,' said he, laughing, 'for my carelessness; and as I threw away a guinea to-day, I must endeavour to save sixpence at least.'

'Ah, the guinea that you threw by mistake into the little girl's hat, as we were coming up Chalk Hill.—Mamma, I wonder that the little girl did not take notice of its being a guinea, and that she did not run after the chaise to give it back again. I should think, if she had been an honest girl, she would have returned it.'

'Miss!—Ma'am!—Sir!' said the basket-woman, 'if it would not be impertinent, may I speak a word?—A little boy and girl have just been here inquiring for a gentleman, who gave them a guinea instead of a half-penny by mistake; and, not five minutes ago, I saw the boy give the guinea to a gentleman's servant, who is there without, and who said his master desired it should be returned to him.'

'There must be some mistake, or some trick in this,' said the gentleman; 'are the children gone?—I must see them—Send after them.'

'I'll go for them myself,' said the good-natured basket-woman; 'I bid them wait in the street yonder; for my mind misgave me, that the man who spoke so short to them was a cheat—with his larks and his claret.'

Paul and Anne were speedily summoned, and brought back by their friend the basket-woman; and Anne, the

moment she saw the gentleman, knew that he was the very person who smiled upon her, who admired her brother's scotcher, and who threw a handful of half-pence into the hat ; but she could not be certain, she said, that she received the guinea from him ; she only thought it was most likely that she did.

' But I can be certain whether the guinea you returned be mine or no,' said the gentleman ; ' I marked the guinea ; it was a light one ; the only light guinea I had, which I put into my waistcoat pocket this morning.'

He rang the bell, and desired the waiter to let the gentleman, who was in the room opposite to him, know that he wished to see him.

' The gentleman in the white parlour, Sir, do you mean?'

' I mean the master of the servant who received a guinea from this child.'

' He is a Mr. Pembroke, Sir,' said the waiter.

Mr. Pembroke came ; and as soon as he heard what had happened, he desired the waiter to shew him to the room, where his servant was at supper.

The dishonest servant, who was supping upon larks and claret, knew nothing of what was going on ; but his knife and fork dropped from his hand, and he overturned a bumper of claret, as he started up from table, in great surprise and terror, when his master came in with a face of indignation, and demanded '*the guinea—the guinea, Sir !* that you got from this child—that guinea which you said I ordered you to ask for from this child.'

The servant, confounded and half-intoxicated, could only stammer out that he had more guineas than one about him, and that he really did not know which it was. He pulled his money out, and spread it upon the table with trembling hands—The marked guinea appeared—His master instantly turned him out of his service with strong expressions of contempt.

' And now, my little honest girl,' said the gentleman who had admired her brother's scotcher, turning to Anne, ' and now tell me whom you are, and what you and your brother want or wish for most in the world.'

In the same moment, Anne and Paul exclaimed, ' The thing we wish for the most in the world is a blanket for our grandmother.'

' She is not our grandmother in reality, I believe, Sir,'

said Paul ; ‘ but she is just as good to us, and taught me to read, and taught Anne to knit, and taught us both that we should be honest—so she has—and I wish she had a new blanket before next winter, to keep her from the cold and the rheumatism. She had the rheumatism sadly, last winter, Sir ; and there is a blanket in this street, that would be just the thing for her.’

‘ She shall have it then ; and,’ continued the gentleman, ‘ I will do something more for you—Do you like to be employed or to be idle best ?’

‘ We like to have something to do always, if we could, Sir,’ said Paul ; ‘ but we are forced to be idle sometimes, because grandmother has not always things for us to do, that we *can* do well.’

‘ Should you like to learn how to make such baskets as these ?’ said the gentleman, pointing to one of the Dunstable straw baskets.

‘ O, very much !’ said Paul.

‘ Very much !’ said Anne.

‘ Then I should like to teach you how to make them,’ said the basket-woman ; ‘ for I’m sure of one thing, that you’d behave honestly to me.’

The gentleman put a guinea into the good-natured basket-woman’s hand, and told her, that he knew she could not afford to teach them her trade for nothing.—‘ I shall come through Dunstable again in a few months,’ added he ; ‘ and I hope to see, that you and your scholars are going on well. If I find that they are, I will do something more for you.’

‘ But,’ said Anne, ‘ we must tell all this to grandmother, and ask her about it ; and I’m afraid—though I’m very happy—that it is getting very late, and that we should not stay here any longer.’

‘ It is a fine moon-light night,’ said the basket-woman ; ‘ and it is not far ; I’ll walk with you, and see you safe home myself.’

The gentleman detained them a few minutes longer, till a messenger, whom he had despatched to purchase the much-wished-for blanket, returned.

‘ Your grandmother will sleep well upon this good blanket, I hope,’ said the gentleman, as he gave it into Paul’s opened arm ; ‘ it has been obtained for her by the honesty of her adopted children.’

## FORGIVE AND FORGET.



**I**n the neighbourhood of a sea-port town in the west of England, there lived a gardener, who had one son, called Maurice, of whom he was very fond. One day his father sent him to the neighbouring town, to purchase some garden seeds for him. When Maurice got to the seed-shop, it was full of people, who were all impatient to be served; first a great tall man, and next a great fat woman pushed before him, and he stood quietly beside the counter, waiting till somebody should be at leisure to attend to him. At length, when all the other people who were in the shop had got what they wanted, the shopman turned to Maurice—‘And what do you want, my patient little fellow?’ said he.

‘I want all these seeds for my father,’ said Maurice, putting a list of seeds into the shopman’s hand; ‘and I have brought money, to pay for them all?’

The seedsman looked out all the seeds that Maurice wanted, and packed them up in paper: he was folding

up some painted lady-pease, when, from a door at the back of the shop, theré came in a square, rough-faced man, who exclaimed, the moment he came in, 'Are the seeds I ordered ready?—The wind's fair—they ought to have been aboard yesterday. And my china jar, is it packed up and directed?—Where is it?'—

'It is up there on the shelf over your head, Sir,' answered the seedsman—'it is very safe, you see, but we have not had time to pack it yet—it shall be done to-day; and we will get the seeds ready for you, Sir, immediately.'

'Immediately!—then stir about it—the seeds will not pack themselves up—make haste, pray.'

'Immediately, Sir, as soon as I have done up the parcel for this little boy.'

'What signifies, the parcel for this little boy? he can wait, and I cannot—wind and tide wait for no man. Here, my good lad, take your parcel, and sheer off,' said the impatient man; and, as he spoke, he took up the parcel of seeds from the counter, as the shopman stooped to look for a sheet of thick brown paper and packthread, to tie it up.

The parcel was but loosely folded up, and as the impatient man lifted it, the weight of the pease, which were within side of it, burst the paper, and all the seeds fell out upon the floor, whilst Maurice in vain held his hands to catch them. The pease rolled to all parts of the shop, the impatient man swore at them, but Maurice, without being out of humour, set about collecting them as fast as possible. Whilst he was busied in this manner, the man got what seeds he wanted, and, as he was talking about them, a sailor came into the shop, and said, 'Captain, the wind has changed within these five minutes, and it looks as if we should have ugly weather.'

'Well, I'm glad of it,' replied the rough-faced man, who was the captain of the ship. 'I am glad to have a day longer to stay ashore, for I've business enough on my hands.'

The captain pushed forward towards the shop door. Maurice, who was kneeling on the floor, picking up his seeds, saw that the captain's foot was entangled in some packthread, which hung down from the shelf, on which



the china jar stood. Maurice saw, that, if the captain took one more step forward, he must pull the string, so that it would throw down the jar, round the bottom of which the packthread was entangled. He immediately caught hold of the captain's leg, and stopped him—'Stay! stand still, Sir,' said he, 'or you will break your china jar.'

The man stood still, looked, and saw how the packthread had caught in his shoe-buckle, and how it was near dragging down his beautiful china jar;—'I am really very much obliged to you, my little fellow,' said he; 'you have saved my jar, which I would not have broken for ten guineas; for it is for my wife, and I've brought it safe from abroad many a league; it would have been a pity if I had broken it just when it was safe landed. I am really much obliged to you, my little fellow; this was returning good for evil. I am sorry I threw down your seeds, as you are such a good-natured, forgiving boy. Be so kind,' continued he, turning to the shopman, 'as to reach down that china jar for me.'

The shopman lifted down the jar very carefully, and the captain took off the cover, and pulled out some tulip roots; 'You seem, by the quantity of seeds you have got, to belong to a gardener. Are you fond of gardening?' said he to Maurice.

'Yes, Sir,' replied Maurice 'very fond of it; for my father is a gardener, and he lets me help him at his work, and he has given me a little garden of my own.'

'Then here are a couple of tulip roots for you; and if you take care of them, I'll promise you that you will have the finest tulips in England in your little garden. These tulips were given to me by a Dutch merchant, who told me, that they were some of the rarest and finest in Holland. They will prosper with you, I'm sure, wind and weather permitting.'

Maurice thanked the gentleman, and returned home, eager to shew his precious tulip roots to his father, and to a companion of his, the son of a nursery-man, who lived near him.—Arthur was the name of the nursery-man's son.

The first thing Maurice did, after shewing his tulip roots to his father, was to run to Arthur's garden, in

search of him. Their gardens were separated only by a low wall of loose stones:—‘Arthur! Arthur! where are you? Are you in your garden? I want you.’—But Arthur made no answer, and did not as usual, come running to meet his friend. ‘I know where you are,’ continued Maurice, ‘and I’m coming to you as fast as the raspberry bushes will let me. I have good news for you—something you’ll be delighted to see, Arthur!—Ha!—but here is something that I am not delighted to see, I am sure,’ said poor Maurice, who, when he had got through the raspberry bushes, and had come in sight of his own garden, beheld his bell-glass—his beloved bell-glass, under which his cucumbers were growing so finely—his only bell-glass, broken to pieces!

‘I am sorry for it,’ said Arthur, who stood leaning upon his spade in his own garden: ‘I am afraid you will be very angry with me.’

‘Why, was it you, Arthur, broke my bell-glass? O, how could you do so!’

‘I was throwing weeds and rubbish over the wall, and by accident a great lump of couch grass, with stones hanging to the roots, fell upon your bell-glass, and broke it as you see.’

Maurice lifted up the lump of couch grass, which had fallen through the broken glass upon his cucumbers, and he looked at his cucumbers for a moment in silence—‘O, my poor cucumbers! you must all die now; I shall see all your yellow flowers withered to-morrow: but it is done, and it cannot be helped; so, Arthur, let us say no more about it.’

‘You are very good; I thought you would have been angry. I am sure, I should have been exceedingly angry, if you had broken the glass, if it had been mine.’

‘O, forgive and forget, as my father always says; that’s the best way. Look what I have got for you.’ Then he told Arthur the story of the captain of the ship, and the china jar; of the seeds having been thrown down, and of the fine tulip roots, which had been given to him; and Maurice concluded by offering one of the precious roots to Arthur, who thanked him with great joy, and repeatedly said, ‘How good you were, not to be angry with me for breaking your bell glass: I am

much more sorry for it, than if you had been in a passion with me

Arthur now went to plant his tulip root ; and Maurice looked at the beds which his companion had been digging, and at all the things which were coming up in his garden.

‘ I don’t know how it is,’ said Arthur, ‘ but you always seem as glad to see the things in my garden coming up, and doing well, as if they were all your own. I am much happier since my father came to live here, and since you and I have been allowed to work and play together, than I ever was before ; for you must know, before we came to live here, I had a cousin in the house with me, who used to plague me : he was not nearly so good-natured as you are : he never took pleasure in looking at my garden, or at any thing that I did, that was well done ; and he never gave me a share of any thing that he had ; and so I did not like him ; how could I ? But I believe, that hating people makes us unhappy ; for I know I never was happy when I was quarrelling with him ; and I am always happy with you, Maurice ; you know we never quarrel.’

It would be well for all the world, if they could be convinced, like Arthur, that to live in friendship is better than to quarrel ; it would be well for all the world, if they followed Maurice’s maxim of ‘ Forgive and forget,’ when they receive, or when they imagine that they receive, an injury.

Arthur’s father, Mr. Oakly, the nursery-man, was apt to take offence at trifles ; and when he thought that any of his neighbours disobliged him, he was too proud to ask them to explain their conduct ; therefore he was often mistaken in his judgment of them. He thought, that it shewed *spirit*, to remember and to resent an injury ; and therefore, though he was not an ill-natured man, he was sometimes led, by this mistaken idea of *spirit*, to do ill-natured things : ‘ A warm friend and a bitter enemy,’ was one of his maxims ; and he had many more enemies than friends. He was not very rich, but he was proud ; and his favourite proverb was, ‘ Better live in spite than in pity.’

When first he settled near Mr. Grant the gardener,

he felt inclined to dislike him, because he was told, that Mr. Grant was a Scotchman, and he had a prejudice against Scotchmen, all of whom he believed to be cunning and avaricious, because he had once been overreached by a Scotch pedlar. Grant's friendly manners, in some degree, conquered this prepossession; but still he secretly suspected, that *this civility*, as he said, *was all show, and that he was not, nor could not, being a Scotchman, be such a hearty friend as a true-born Englishman.*'

Grant had some remarkable fine raspberries. The fruit was so large, as to be quite a curiosity. When it was in season, many strangers came from the neighbouring town, which was a sea-bathing place, to look at these raspberries, which obtained the name *Brobdignag* raspberries.

'How came you, pray, neighbour Grant, if a man may ask, by these wonderful fine raspberries?' said Mr. Oakly, one evening to the gardener.

'That's a secret,' replied Grant, with an arch smile.

'O, in case it's a secret, I've no more to say; for I never meddle with any man's secrets, that he does not choose to trust me with. But I wish, neighbour Grant, you would put down that book. You are always poring over some book or another, when a man comes to see you, which is not according to my notions (being a plain, *unlarned* Englishman bred and born) so civil and neighbourly as might be.'

Mr. Grant hastily shut his book, but remarked with a shrewd glance at his son, that it was in that book he found his *Brobdignag* raspberries.

'You are pleased to be pleasant upon them that have not the luck to be as book-*larned* as yourself, Mr. Grant; but I take it, being only a plain-spoken Englishman, as I observed afore, that one is to the full as like to find a raspberry in one's garden, as in one's book, Mr. Grant.'

Grant, observing that his neighbour spoke rather in a surly tone, did not contradict him: being well versed in the bible, he knew that 'A soft word turneth away wrath;' and he answered in a good-humoured voice, 'I hear, neighbour Oakly, you are likely to make a great deal of money of your nursery this year. Here's to the

health of you and your's, not forgetting the seedling larch, which I see are coming on finely.'

'Thank ye, neighbour, kindly : the larch are coming on tolerably well, that's certain ; and here's to your good health, Mr. Grant—you and your's, not forgetting your what d'ye call 'em raspberries.'—(*drinks*)—and, after a pause resumes—'I'm not apt to be a beggar, neighbour, but if you could give me—'

Here Mr. Oakly was interrupted by the entrance of some strangers, and he did not finish making his request—Mr. Oakly was not, as he said of himself, apt to ask favours, and nothing but Grant's cordiality could have conquered his prejudices, so far as to tempt him to ask a favour from a Scotchman.—He was going to have asked for some of the Brobdignag raspberry plants.—The next day the thought of the raspberry plants recurred to his memory, but being a bashful man, he did not like to go himself on purpose to make his petition, and he desired his wife, who was just sitting out to market, to call at Grant's gate, and, if he was at work in his garden, to ask him for a few plants of his raspberries.

The answer which Oakly's wife brought to him was, that Mr. Grant had not a raspberry plant in the world to give him, and that if he had ever so many he would not give one away, except to his own son.—Oakly flew into a passion when he received this message, declared it was just such a mean shabby trick as might have been expected from a Scotchman—called himself a booby, a dupe, and a blockhead, for ever having trusted to the civil speeches of a Scotchman—swore that he would die in the parish workhouse, before he would ever ask another favour, be it never so small, from a Scotchman.—Related for the hundredth time to his wife the way, in which he had been taken in by the Scotch pedlar ten years ago, and concluded by for-swearing all further intercourse with Mr. Grant, and all belonging to him.

'Son Arthur,' said he, addressing himself to the boy, who just then came in from work—'Son Arthur, do you hear me, let me never again see you with Grant's son.'

'With Maurice, father?'

'With Maurice Grant, I say ;—I forbid you from this day and hour forward to have any thing to do with him.'

‘O, why, dear father?’

‘Ask me no questions, but do as I bid you.’

Arthur burst out a crying, and only said, ‘Yes, father, I’ll do as you bid me, to be sure.’

‘Why now, what does the boy cry for? is there no other boy, simpleton, think you, to play with, but this Scotchman’s son? I’ll find out another playfellow for ye, child, if that be all.’

‘That’s not all, father,’ said Arthur, trying to stop himself from sobbing; ‘but the thing is, I shall never have such another playfellow,—I shall never have such another friend as Maurice Grant.’

‘Ah, poor fool!’ said his father, pressing his son’s head to him, ‘thee be’st just such another as thy father—ready to be taken in by a fair word or so.—But when you’ve lived as long as I have, you’ll find that friends are not as plenty as blackberries, and don’t grow upon every bush.’

‘No, indeed, I don’t think they do,’ said Arthur, ‘I never had a friend before, and I shall never have such another as Maurice Grant.’

‘Like father like son—you may think yourself well off to have done with him.’

‘Done with him! O, father, and shall I never go again to work in his garden, and may he not come to mine?’

‘No,’ replied Oakly, sturdily;—‘his father has used me uncivil, and no man shall use me uncivil twice.—I say no.—Wife, sweep up this hearth.—Boy, don’t take on like a fool, but eat thy bacon and greens, and let’s hear no more of Maurice Grant.’

Arthur promised to obey his father, he only begged, that he might once more speak to Maurice, and tell him, that it was by his father’s orders he acted.—This request was granted; but when Arthur further begged to know what reason he might give for this separation, his father refused to tell his reasons.

The two friends took leave of one another very sorrowfully.

Mr. Grant, when he heard of all this, endeavoured to discover what could have offended his neighbour; but all explanation was prevented by the obstinate silence of Oakly.

Now the message which Grant really sent about the Brobdignag raspberries, was somewhat different from that, which Mr. Oakly received. The message was, that the raspberries were not Mr. Grant's, that therefore he had no right to give them away; that they belonged to his son Maurice, and that this was not the right time of year for planting them.—This message had been unluckily misunderstood.—Grant gave his answer to his wife; she to a Welsh servant girl, who did not perfectly comprehend her mistress's broad Scotch; and she in her turn could not make herself intelligible to Mrs. Oakly, who hated the Welsh accent, and whose attention, when the servant girl delivered the message, was principally engrossed by the management of her own horse. The horse on which Mrs. Oakly rode this day being ill broken, would not stand still quietly at the gate, and she was extremely impatient to receive her answer, and to ride on to market.—On such slight things do the quarrels of neighbours often depend.

Oakly, when he had once resolved to dislike his neighbour Grant, could not long remain without finding out fresh causes of complaint.—There was in Grant's garden a plum-tree, which was planted close to the loose stone wall, that divided the garden from the nursery. The soil in which the plum-tree was planted happened not to be quite so good, as that which was on the opposite side of the wall, and the plum-tree had forced its way through the wall and gradually had taken possession of the ground which it liked best.—Oakly thought the plum-tree, as it belonged to Mr. Grant, had no right to make its appearance on his ground: an attorney told him, that he might oblige Grant to cut it down; but Mr. Grant refused to cut down his plum-tree at the attorney's desire, and the attorney persuaded Oakly to go to law about the business, and the lawsuit went on for some months.—The attorney, at the end of this time, came to Oakly with a demand for money to carry on his suit, assuring him, that in a short time it would be determined in his favour.—Oakly paid his attorney ten golden guineas, remarked that it was a great sum for him to pay, and that nothing but the love of justice could make him persevere in this lawsuit about a bit of

ground, 'which, after all,' said he, 'is not worth two-pence. The plum-tree does me little or no damage, but I don't like to be imposed upon by a Scotchman.'

The attorney saw and took advantage of Oakly's prejudice against the natives of Scotland; and he persuaded him, that to shew the *spirit* of a true-born Englishman, it was necessary, whatever it might cost him, to persist in this lawsuit.

It was soon after this conversation with the attorney, that Mr. Oakly walked with resolute steps towards the plum-tree, saying to himself, 'If it cost me a hundred pound, I will not let this cunning Scotchman get the better of me.'

Arthur interrupted his father's reverie, by pointing to a book and some young plants, which lay upon the wall. 'I fancy, father,' said he, 'those things are for you, for there is a little note directed to you, in Maurice's handwriting:—shall I bring it to you?'

'Yes, let me read it child, since I must.'

It contained these words:

'Dear Mr. Oakly,

'I don't know why you have quarrelled with us; I am very sorry for it. But though you are angry with me, I am not angry with you. I hope you will not refuse some of my Brobdignag raspberry plants, which you asked for a great while ago, when we were all good friends. It was not the right time of year to plant them then, which was the reason they were not sent to you: but it is just the right time to plant them now; and I send you the book, in which you will find the reason why we always put sea-weed ashes about their roots: and I have got some sea-weed ashes for you. You will find the ashes in the flower-pot upon the wall. I have never spoken to Arthur, nor he to me, since you bid us not. So wishing your Brobdignag raspberries may turn out as well as our's, and longing to be all friends again, I am, with love to dear Arthur, and self,

'Your affectionate neighbour's son,

'MAURICE GRANT.'

'P. S. It is now four months since the quarrel began; and that is a very long while.'



A great part of the effect of this letter was lost upon Oakly, because he was not very expert at reading writing, and it cost him much trouble to spell it, and put it together. However, he seemed touched by it, and said, 'I believe this Maurice loves you well enough, Arthur, and he seems a good sort of boy; but as to the raspberries, I believe all that he says about them is but an excuse; and at any rate, as I could not get 'em when I asked for them, I'll not have them now.—Do you hear me, I say, Arthur? What are you reading there?'

Arthur was reading the page that was doubled down in the book which Maurice had left along with the raspberry plants upon the wall. Arthur read aloud as follows:

(Monthly Magazine, Dec. '93. page 421.)

'There is a sort of strawberry cultivated at Jersey, which is almost covered with sea-weed in the winter, in like manner as many plants in England are with litter from the stable. These strawberries are usually of the largeness of a middle-sized apricot, and the flavour is particularly grateful. In Jersey and Guernsey, situate scarcely one degree farther south than Cornwall, all kinds of fruit, pulse, and vegetables, are produced in their seasons a fortnight or three weeks sooner than in England, even on the southern shores; and snow will scarcely remain twenty-four hours on the earth. Although this may be attributed to these islands being surrounded with a salt, and consequently a moist atmosphere, yet the ashes (sea-weed ashes) made use of as manure, may also have their portion of influence.\*

'And here,' continued Arthur, 'is something written with a pencil, on a slip of paper, and it is Maurice's writing. I will read it to you.'

'When I read in this book what is said about the strawberries growing as large as apricots, after they had been covered over with sea-weed, I thought that, perhaps, sea-weed ashes might be good for my father's raspberries; and I asked him if he would give me leave to try them. He gave me leave, and I went directly and gather-

\*It is necessary to observe, that this experiment has never been actually tried upon raspberry plants.

ed together some sea-weed that had been cast on shore ; and I dried it, and burned it, and then I manured the raspberries with it, and the year afterwards the raspberries grew to the size that you have seen. Now, the reason I tell you this, is ; first, that you may know how to manage your raspberries, and next, because I remember you looked very grave, and as if you were not pleased with my father, Mr. Grant, when he told you, that the way by which he came by his Brobdnag raspberries was a secret. Perhaps this was the thing, that has made you so angry with us all ; for you never have come to see father since that evening. Now I have told you all I know ; and so I hope you will not be angry with us any longer.

Mr. Oakly was much pleased by this openness, and said, ‘ Why now, Arthur, this is something like,—this is telling one the thing one wants to know, without fine speeches.—This is like an Englishman more than a Scotchman—Pray, Arthur, do you know whether your friend Maurice was born in England or in Scotland ?’

‘ No, indeed, Sir, I don’t know—I never asked—I did not think it signified—All I know is, that wherever he was born he is *very* good. Look, papa, my tulip is blowing.’

‘ Upon my word, this will be a beautiful tulip.’

‘ It was given to me by Maurice.’

‘ And did you give him nothing for it ?’

‘ Nothing in the world ; and he gave it to me just at the time when he had good cause to be very angry with me, just when I had broken his bell-glass.’

‘ I have a great mind to let you play together again,’ said Arthur’s father.

‘ O, if you would,’ cried Arthur, clapping his hands, ‘ how happy we should be ; do you know, father, I have often sat for an hour at a time up in that crab-tree, looking at Maurice at work in his garden, and wishing that I was at work with him.—My garden, look ye, father, is not nearly in such good order as it used to be ; but every thing would go right again if——’

Here Arthur was interrupted by the attorney, who came to ask Mr. Oakly some question about the lawsuit concerning the plum-tree. Oakly shewed him Maurice’s letter ; and to Arthur’s extreme astonishment,

the attorney had no sooner read it, than he exclaimed, 'What an artful little gentleman this is! I never, in the course of all my practice, met with any thing better. Why this is the most cunning letter I ever read.'

'Where's the cunning?' said Oakly, and he put on his spectacles.

'My good Sir, don't you see, that all this stuff about Brobdignag raspberries is to void off your suit about the plum-tree? They know—that is, Mr. Grant, who is sharp enough, knows—that he will be worsted in that suit; that he must, in short, pay you a good round sum for damages, if it goes on.'—

'Damages!' said Oakly, staring round him at the plum-tree: 'but I don't know what you mean. I mean nothing but what's honest. I don't mearn to ask for any good round sum; for the plum-tree has done me no great harm by coming into my garden; but only I don't choose it should come there without my leave.'

'Well, well,' said the attorney; 'I understand all that; but what I want to make you, Mr. Oakly, understand, is, that this Grant and his son only want to make up matters with you, and prevent the thing's coming to a fair trial, by sending you, in this underhand sort of way, a bribe of a few raspberries.'

'A bribe,' exclaimed Oakly, 'I never took a bribe, and I never will;' and with sudden indignation, he pulled the raspberry-plants from the ground in which Arthur was planting them; and he threw them over the wall into Grant's garden.

Maurice had put his tulip, which was beginning to blow, in a flower-pot on the top of the wall, in hopes that his friend Arthur would see it from day to day.

Alas! he knew not in what a dangerous situation he had placed it.—One of his own Brobdignag raspberry plants, swung by the angry arm of Oakly, struck off the head of his precious tulip.

Arthur, who was full of the thought of convincing his father that the attorney was mistaken in his judgment of poor Maurice, did not observe the fall of the tulip.

The next day, when Maurice saw his raspberry plants scattered upon the ground, and his favourite tulip broken, he was in much astonishment, and, for some moments, angry; but anger, with him, never lasted long. He was

convinced, that all this must be owing to some accident or mistake; he could not believe, that any one could be so malicious, as to injure him on purpose—‘And even if they did all this on purpose to vex me,’ said he to himself, ‘the best thing I can do, is not to let it vex me.—Forgive and forget.’

This temper of mind Maurice was more happy in enjoying, than he could have been made without it, by the possession of all the tulips in Holland.

Tulips were, at this time, things of great consequence in the estimation of the country, several miles round, where Maurice and Arthur lived.

There was a florist’s feast to be held at the neighbouring town, at which a prize of a handsome set of gardening tools was to be given to the person, who could produce the finest flower of its kind. A tulip was the flower which was thought the finest the preceding year, and consequently, numbers of people afterwards endeavoured to procure tulip roots, in hopes of obtaining the prize this year.

Arthur’s tulip was beautiful. As he examined it from day to day, and every day thought it improving, he longed to thank his friend Maurice for it; and he often mounted into his crab-tree, to look into Maurice’s garden, in hopes of seeing his tulip also in full bloom and beauty. He never could see it.

The day of the florist’s feast arrived, and Oakly went with his son, and the fine tulip, to the place of meeting. It was on a spacious bowling-green. All the flowers, of various sorts, were ranged upon a terrace at the upper end of the bowling-green; and, amongst all this gay variety, the tulip which Maurice had given to Arthur appeared conspicuously beautiful. To the owner of this tulip the prize was adjudged; and, as the handsome garden tools were delivered to Arthur, he heard a well-known voice wish him joy. He turned, looked about him, and saw his friend Maurice.

‘But, Maurice, where is your own tulip?’ said Mr. Oakly, ‘I thought Arthur you told me, that he kept one for himself.’

‘So I did,’ said Maurice; ‘but somebody (I suppose by accident) broke it.’

‘Somebody! who!’ cried Arthur and Mr. Oakly at once.

‘Somebody who threw the raspberry plants back again over the wall,’ replied Maurice.

‘That was me—that somebody was me,’ said Oakly, ‘I scorn to deny it; but I did not intend to break your tulip, Maurice.’

‘Dear Maurice,’ said Arthur—‘you know I may call him dear Maurice—now you are by papa—Here are all the garden tools; take them and welcome.’

‘Not one of them,’ said Maurice, drawing back.

‘Offer them to the father—offer them to Mr. Grant,’ whispered Oakly; ‘he’ll take them, I’ll answer for it.’

Mr. Oakly was mistaken: the father would not accept of the tools.

Mr. Oakly stood surprised——‘Certainly,’ said he to himself, ‘this cannot be such a miser as I took him for; and he walked immediately up to Grant, and bluntly said to him, ‘Mr. Grant, your son has behaved very handsome to my son; and you seem to be glad of it.’

‘To be sure I am,’ said Grant.

‘Which,’ continued Oakly, ‘gives me a better opinion of you than ever I had before—I mean, than ever I had since the day you sent me the shabby answer about those foolish, what d’ye call ’em cursed raspberries.’

‘What shabby answer?’ said Grant, with surprise; and Oakly repeated exactly the message which he received; and Grant declared that he never sent any such message. He repeated exactly the answer which he really sent, and Oakly immediately stretched out his hand to him, saying, ‘I believe you: no more need be said: I’m only sorry I did not ask you about this four months ago; and so I should have done, if you had not been a Scotchman. Till now, I never rightly liked a Scotchman. We may thank this good little fellow,’ continued he, turning to Maurice, ‘for our coming at last to a right understanding: there was no holding out against his good-nature. I’m sure from the bottom of my heart, I’m sorry I broke his tulip.—Shake hands, boys; I’m glad to see you, Arthur, look so happy again, and hope Mr. Grant will forgive——’

‘O, forgive and forget,’ said Grant and his son at the

same moment ; and from this time forward, the two families lived in friendship with each other.

Oakly laughed at his own folly, in having been persuaded to go to law about the plum-tree ; and he, in process of time, so completely conquered his early prejudice against Scotchmen, that he and Grant became partners in business. Mr. Grant's book-*larning*, and knowledge of arithmetic, he found highly useful to him ; and he, on his side, possessed a great many active, good qualities, which became serviceable to his partner.

The two boys rejoiced in this family union ; and Arthur often declared, that they owed all their happiness to Maurice's favourite maxim, 'Forgive and forget.'

# ETON MONTEM.



*Extract from the Courier, May, 1799.*

## ‘ETON MONTEM.

‘**Y**ESTERDAY this triennial ceremony took place, with which the public are too well acquainted, to require a particular description. A collection, called *Salt*, is taken from the public, which forms a purse, to support the Captain of the school in his studies at Cambridge. This collection is made by the scholars, dressed in fancy dresses, all round the country.

‘At eleven o’clock, the youths being assembled in their habiliments at the College, the Royal Family set off from the Castle to see them, and, after walking round the Court Yard, they proceeded to Salt Hill in the following order:—

‘His Majesty, His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, and the Earl of Uxbridge.

‘Their Royal Highnesses the Dukes of Kent and Cum-

berland, Earl Morton and General Gwynne, all on horseback, dressed in the Windsor uniform, except the Prince of Wales, who wore a suit of dark blue, and a brown surtout over.

‘Then followed the Scholars, preceded by the Mareschal Sergeants, the Musicians of the Staffordshire Band, and Mr. Ford, Captain of the Seminary, the Sergeant Major, Sergeants, Colonels, Corporals, Musicians, Ensign, Lieutenant, Stewart, Salt Bearers, Polemen, and Runners.

‘The cavalcade being brought up by Her Majesty and her amiable daughters in two carriages, and a numerous company of equestrians and pedestrians, all eager to behold their Sovereign and his family. Among the former, Lady Lane was foremost in the throng; only two others dared venture their persons on horseback in such a multitude.

‘The King and Royal Family were stopped on Eton Bridge by Messrs. Yonge and Mansfield, the Salt Bearers, to whom their Majesties delivered their customary donation of fifty guineas each.

‘At Salt Hill, His Majesty, with his usual affability, took upon himself to arrange the procession round the Royal carriages; and even when the horses were taken off, with the assistance of the Duke of Kent, fastened the traces round the pole of the coaches, to prevent any inconvenience.

‘An exceeding heavy shower of rain coming on, the Prince took leave, and went to the Windmill Inn, till it subsided. The King and his attendants weathered it out in their great coats.

‘After the young gentlemen had walked round the carriages, Ensign Vince, and the Salt Bearers, proceeded to the summit of the Hill, but the wind being boisterous, he could not exhibit his dexterity in displaying his flag, and the space being too small before the carriages, from the concourse of spectators, the King kindly acquiesced in not having it displayed under such inconveniences.

‘Their Majesties and the Princesses then returned home, the King occasionally stopping to converse with the Dean of Windsor, the Earl of Harrington, and other Noblemen.



‘The Scholars partook of an elegant dinner at the Windmill Inn, and in the evening walked on Windsor Terrace.

‘Their Royal Highnesses the Prince of Wales and Duke of Cumberland, after taking leave of their Majesties, set off for town, and honoured the Opera House with their presence in the evening.

‘The profit arising from the Salt collected, according to account, amounted to above 800l.

‘The Stadtholder, the Duke of Gordon, Lord and Lady Melbourne, Viscount Brome, and a numerous train of fashionable Nobility, were present.

‘The following is an account of the dresses, made as usual very handsomely by Mrs. Snow, milliner, of Windsor:

‘Mr. Ford, Captain, with eight Gentlemen to attend him as servitors.

‘Mr. Sergeant, Marshal.

‘Mr. Brardrith, Colonel.

‘Mr. Plumtree, Lieutenant.

‘Mr. Vince, Ensign.

‘Mr. Young, Colledge Salt Bearer; white and gold dress, rich satin bag, covered with gold netting.

‘Mr. Mansfield, Oppident, white, purple, and orange dress, trimmed with silver, rich satin bag, purple and silver; each carrying elegant poles, with gold and silver cord.

‘Mr. Keity, yellow and black velvet, helmet trimmed with silver.

‘Mr. Bartelot, plaid mantle and sandals, Scotch bonnet, a very Douglas.

‘Mr. Knapp, flesh-colour and blue; Spanish hat and feathers.

‘Mr. Ripley, rose-colour; helmet.

‘Mr. Islip, (being in mourning,) a scarf; helmet, black velvet, and white satin.

‘Mr. Tomkins, violet and silver; helmet.

‘Mr. Thackery, lilac and silver; Roman cap.

‘Mr. Drury, Mazarin blue; fancy cap.

‘Mr. Davis, slate-colour and straw.

‘Mr. Routh, pink and silver; Spanish hat.

‘Mr. Curtis, purple; fancy cap.

‘Mr. Lloyd, blue; ditto.

‘At the conclusion of the ceremony, the Royal family returned to Windsor, and the boys were all sumptuously

entertained at the tavern, at Salt Hill. About six in the evening all the boys returned in the order of procession, and, marching round the great square of Eton, were dismissed. The Captain then paid his respects to the Royal Family, at the Queen's Lodge, Windsor, previous to his departure for King's College, Cambridge, to defray which expense the produce of the Montem was presented to him.

'The day concluded by a brilliant promenade of beauty, rank, and fashion, on Windsor Terrace, enlivened by the performance of several bands of music.

'The origin of the procession is from the custom by which the Manor was held.

'The custom of hunting the Ram belonged to Eton College, as well as the custom of Salt, but it was discontinued by Dr. Cook, late Dean of Ely. Now this custom we know to have been entered on the Register of the Royal Abbey of Bec, in Normandy, as one belonging to the Manor of East or Great Wrotham, in Norfolk, given by Ralph De Toni to the Abbey of Bec, and was as follows:—'When the harvest was finished, the tenants were to leave half an acre of barley, and a ram let loose, and if they caught him, he was their own to make merry with, but if he escaped from them, he was the Lord's. The Etonians, in order to secure the ram, houghed him in the Irish fashion, and then attacked him with great clubs. The cruelty of this proceeding brought it into disuse, and now it exists no longer.'—(*See the Register of the Royal Abbey of Bec, folio 58.*)

'After the dissolution of the alien priories, in 1414, by the Parliament of Leicester, they remained in the Crown till Henry VI, who gave Wrotham Manor to Eton College; and if the Eton Fellows would search, they would perhaps find the Manor in their possession, that was held by the custom of Salt.'



## MEN.

Alderman Bursal, Father of young Bursal.

Lord John,

Talbot,

Wheeler,

Bursal,

Rory O'Ryan,

Mr. Newington, Landlord of the Inn at Salt Hill.

Farmer Hearty.

A Waiter—and Crowd of Eton Lads.

} young Gentlemen of Eton, from 17  
to 19 years of age.

## WOMEN.

The Marchioness of Piercefield, Mother of Lord John.

Lady Violetta—her Daughter—a Child of six or seven  
years old.

Mrs. Talbot.

Louisa Talbot, her Daughter.

Miss Bursal, Daughter to the Alderman.

Mrs. Newington, Landlady of the Inn at Salt Hill.

Sally, a Chambermaid.

Patty, a Country Girl.

Pipe and Tabour, and Dance of Peasants.

# ETON MONTEM.

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## SCENE I.

The Bar of the Windmill Inn, at Salt Hill.

Mr. and Mrs. Newington, the Landlord and Landlady.

*Landlady.* 'TIS an impossibility, Mr. Newington, and that's enough. Say no more about it: 'tis an impossibility in the *natur* of things. (*She ranges jellies, &c. in the Bar.*) And pray, do take your great old-fashioned tankard, Mr. Newington, from among my jellies and confectionaries.

*Landlord* (*takes his tankard and drinks*). Any thing for a quiet life. If it is an impossibility, I've no more to say; only, for the soul of me, I can't see the great impossibility, wife.

*Landlady.* Wife, indeed!—Wife!—wife!—wife every minute.

*Landlord.* Hey day! Why, what a plague would you have me call you? The other day you quarrelled with me for calling you *Mrs. Landlady*.

*Landlady.* To be sure I did, and very proper in me I should. I've turned off three waiters and five chambermaids already, for screaming after me *Mrs. Landlady!*

*Mrs. Landlady!* But 'tis all your ill manners.

*Landlord.* Ill manners! Why, if I may be so bold, if you are not *Mrs. Landlady*, in the name of wonder what are you?

*Landlady.* *Mrs. Newington*, Mr. Newington.

*Landlord* (*drinks*). *Mrs. Newington*, Mr. Newington drinks your health; for, I suppose, I must not be landlord no more in my own house. (*shrugs.*)

*Landlady.* O, as to that, I have no objection nor impediments to your being called *Landlord*: you look it and become it—very proper.

*Landlord.* Why, yes, thank God and my tankard, I do look it, and become it, and am nowise ashamed of it: but every one to their mind, as you, wife, don't fancy the being called *Mrs. Landlady*.

*Landlady.* To be sure I don't. Why, when folks hear

the old-fashioned cry of Mrs. Landlady! Mrs. Landlady! what do they expect, think you, to see, but an overgrown, fat, feather-bed of a woman, coming waddling along with her thumbs sticking on each side of her apron, o' this fashion? Now, to see me coming, nobody would take me to be a landlady!

*Landlord.* Very true, indeed, wife—Mrs. Newington, I mean—I ask pardon:—but now to go on with what we were saying about the impossibility of letting that old lady and the civil-spoken young lady there above, have them there rooms for another day.

*Landlady.* Now, Mr. Newington, let me hear no more about that old gentleman, and that civil-spoken young lady. Fair words cost nothing; and I've a notion that's the cause they are so plenty with the young lady. Neither o' them, I take it, by what they've ordered since their coming into the house, are such grand folk, that one need be so *petticular* about them.

*Landlord.* Why, they came only in a chaise and pair, to be sure; I can't deny that.

*Landlady.* But, bless my stars! what signifies talking? Don't you know, as well as I do, Mr. Newington, that to-morrow is Eton Montem; and that if we had twenty times as many rooms, and as many more to the back of them, it would not be one too many for all the company we've a right to expect, and those the highest quality o' the land. Nay, what do I talk of to-morrow; isn't my Lady Piercefield and suite expected? and moreover, Mr. and Miss Bursal's to be here, and will call for as much in an hour as your civil-spoken young lady in a twelve-month, I reckon. So, Mr. Newington, if you don't think proper to go up, and inform the ladies above, that the Dolphin rooms are not for them, I must *speak* myself, though 'tis a thing I never do when I can help it.

*Landlord (aside).* She not like to speak! (*Aloud*) My dear, you can speak a power better than I can: so take it all upon yourself, if you please: for, old-fashioned as I and my tankard here be, I can't make a speech that borders on the uncivil order to a lady, for the life and lungs of me. So in the name of goodness, do you go up, Mrs. Newington.

*Landlady.* And so I will, Mr. Newington. Help ye!

Civilities and rarities are out o' season for them that can't pay for them in this world, and very proper.

[*Exit Landlady.*]

*Landlord.* And very proper! Ha! who comes yonder? The Eton chap, who wheedled me into lending him my best hunter last year, and was the ruination of him: but that he must be paid for, wheedle or no wheedle; and, for the matter of wheedling, I'd stake this here Mr. Wheeler, that is making up to me, do you see, against e'er a boy, man, or hobbledehoy, in all Eton, London, or Christendom, let the other be who he will.

*Enter Wheeler.*

*Wheel.* A fine day, Mr. Newington.

*Landlord.* A fine day, Mr. Wheeler.

*Wheel.* And I hope, for *your* sake, we may have as fine a day for the Montem to-morrow. It will be a pretty penny in your pocket! Why, all the world will be here; and (*looking round at the jellies. &c.*) so much the better for them; for here are good things enough and enough for them. And here's the best thing of all, the good old tankard still; not empty, I hope.

*Landlord.* Not empty, I hope. Here's to you, Mr. Wheeler.

*Wheel.* Mr. Wheeler!—*Captain* Wheeler, if you please.

*Landlord.* You *Captain* Wheeler!—Why, I thought in former times it was always the oldest scholar at Eton, that was captain at the Montems; and didn't Mr. Talbot come afore you?

*Wheel.* Not at all; we came on the same day—some say I came first—some say Talbot; so the choice of which of us two is to be captain, is to be put to the vote amongst the lads—most votes carry it; and I have most votes, I fancy; so I shall be captain to-morrow; and a devilish deal of *salt*,\* I reckon, I shall pocket. Why, the collection at the last Montem, they say, came to a plump thousand! No bad thing for a young fellow to set out with for Oxford or Cambridge—Hey!

*Landlord.* And no bad thing, before he sets out for

\* *Salt*, the *cant* name given by Eton lads to the money collected at Montem.

Cambridge or Oxford, 'twould be for a young gentleman, to pay his debts.

*Wheel.* Debts! O, time enough for that. I've a little account with you for horses, I know;—but that's between you and I, you know—mum.

*Landlord.* Mum me no mums, Mr. Wheeler. Between you and I, my best hunter has been ruinationed; and I can't afford to be mum. So you'll take no offence if I speak; and as you'll set off to-morrow as soon as the Montem's over, you'll be pleased to settle it with me some way or other to-day, as we've no other time.

*Wheel.* No time so proper, certainly. Where's the little account?—I have money sent me for my Montem dress, and I can squeeze that much out of it. I came over from Eton on purpose to settle with you. But as to the hunter, you must call upon Talbot—do you understand—to pay for him: for though Talbot and I had him the same day, 'twas Talbot did for him, and Talbot must pay. I spoke to him about it, and charged him to remember you; for I never forgot to speak a good word for my friends.

*Landlord.* So I perceive.

*Wheel.* I'll make bold just to give you my opinion of these jellies, whilst you are getting my account, Mr. Newington.

[*He swallows down a jelly or two—*

*Landlord is going—*

*Enter Talbot.*

*Talb.* Hollo, landlord! where are you making off so fast. Here, your jellies are all going as fast as yourself.

*Wheeler (aside).* Talbot! I wish I was a hundred miles off.

*Landlord.* You are heartily welcome, Mr. Talbot. A good morning to you, Sir: I'm glad to see you—very glad to see you, Mr. Talbot.

*Talb.* Then shake hands, my honest landlord.

[*Talbot, in shaking hands with him, puts a purse into the landlord's hand.*

*Landlord.* What's here! Guineas!

*Talb.* The hunter, you know; since Wheeler won't pay, I must—That's all.—Good morning.

*Wheel. (aside.)* What a fool!

[*Landlord, as Talbot is going, catches hold of his coat.*



*Landlord.* Hold, Mr. Talbot! this won't do.

*Talb.* Won't it? Well, then, my watch must go.

*Landlord.* Nay, nay! but you are in such a cursed hurry to pay; you won't hear a man. Half this is enough for your share o' the mischief, in all conscience. Mr. Wheeler, there, had the horse on the same day.

*Wheel.* But Bursal's my witness—

*Talb.* O, say no more about witnesses; a man's conscience is always his best witness, or his worst.—*Landlord,* take your money; and no more words.

*Wheel.* This is very genteel of you, Talbot. I always thought you would do the genteel thing, as I knew you to be so generous and considerate.

*Talb.* Don't wast your fine speeches, Wheeler, I advise you, this election time. Keep them for Bursal, or Lord John, or some of those who like them. They won't go down with *me*. Good morning to you. I give you notice I'm going back to Eton as fast as I can gallop; and who knows what plain speaking may do with the Eton lads? I may be captain yet, Wheeler. Have a care? Is my horse ready, there?

*Landlord.* Mr. Talbot's horse, there! Mr. Talbot's horse, I say,

*Talbot sings.*

' He carries weight—he rides a race—  
' 'Tis for a thousand pound!'

[*Exit Talbot.*

*Wheel.* And, dear me! I shall be left behind. A horse for me, pray! a horse for Mr. Wheeler.

[*Exit Wheeler.*

*Landlord* (*calls very loud*). Mr. Talbot's horse! Hang the hostler! I'll saddle him myself.

[*Exit Landlord.*

## SCENE.

A Dining-room in the Inn at Salt Hill—

Mrs. Talbot and Louisa.

*Louisa* (*laughing*). With what an air Mrs. Landlady made her exit.

*Mrs. Tal.* When I was young, they say I was proud; but I am humble enough now: these petty mortifications do not vex me.

*Louisa.* It is well my brother was gone before Mrs. Landlady made her *entree*; for if he had heard her rude speech, he would have given her, at least, the retort courteous.

*Mrs. Tal.* Now tell me, honestly, my Louisa—You were, a few days ago, at Bursal House. Since you have left it, and have felt something of the difference that is made in this world between splendour and no splendour, have you never regretted, that you did not stay there, and that you did not bear more patiently with Miss Bursal's little airs?

*Louisa.* Never for a moment. At first Miss Bursal paid me a vast deal of attention; but, for what reason I know not, she suddenly changed her manner, grew first strangely cold, then condescendingly familiar, and at last downright rude. I could not guess the cause of these variations.

*Mrs. Talb. (aside.)* I guess the cause too well.

*Louisa.* But as I perceived the lady was out of tune, I was in haste to leave her. I should make a very bad, and, I am sure, a very miserable toad-eater. I had much rather, if I were obliged to choose, earn my own bread, than live as toad-eater with any body.

*Mrs. Talb.* Fine talking, dear Louisa!

*Louisa.* Don't you believe me to be in earnest, mother! To be sure you cannot know what I would do, unless I were put to the trial.

*Mrs. Talb.* Nor you either, my dear.

[*She sighs and is silent.*]

*Louisa (takes her mother's hand).* What is the matter, dear mother? You used to say, that seeing my brother always made you feel ten years younger; yet even whilst he was here, you had, in spite of all your efforts to conceal them, these sudden fits of sadness.

*Mrs. Talb.* The Montem—is not it to-morrow? Aye; but my boy is not sure of being captain.

*Louisa.* No, there is one Wheeler, who, as he says, is most likely to be chosen captain. He has taken prodigious pains to flatter and win over many to his interest. My brother does not so much care about it. He is not avaricious.

*Mrs. Tal.* I love your generous spirit and his; but,

alas! my dear, people may live to want and wish for money without being avaricious. I would not say a word to Talbot; full of spirits, as he was this morning, I would not say a word to him, till after the Montem, of what has happened.

*Louisa.* And what has happened, dear mother? Sit down, you tremble.

*Mrs. Talbot (sits down and puts a letter into Louisa's hand).* Read that, love. A messenger brought me that from town a few hours ago.

*Louisa (reads).* 'By an express from Portsmouth, we hear, the Bombay Castle East Indiaman is lost, with all your fortune on board.'—*All!* I hope there is something left for you to live upon.

*Mrs. T.* About 150l. a year for us all.

*Louisa.* That is enough, is it not, for you.

*Mrs. Tal.* For me love? I am an old woman, and want but little in this world, and shall be soon out of it.

*Louisa (kneels down beside her).* Do not speak so dearest mother.

*Mrs. Tal.* Enough, for me, love! Yes enough, and to much for me. I am not thinking of myself.

*Louisa.* Then, as to my brother, he has such abilities, and such industry, he will make a fortune at the bar for himself, most certainly.

*Mrs. Tal.* But his education is not completed. How shall we provide him with money at Cambridge?

*Louisa.* This Montem—the last time the Captain had eight hundred—the time before, a thousand pounds. O, I hope—I fear! Now, indeed, I know, that, without being avaricious, we may want and wish for money.

[*Landlady's voice heard behind the Scenes.*

*Landlady.* Waiter! Miss Bursal's curricle, and Mr. Bursal's vis-a-vis.—Run, see that the Dolphin's empty. I say run—run.

*Mrs. Talbot.* I will rest, for a few minutes, upon the sofa, in this bed chamber, before we set off.

*Louisa (goes to open the door).* They have bolted, or locked it. How unlucky!

[*She turns the key, and tries to unlock the door.*

*Enter Waiter.*

*Wait.* Ladies, I'm sorry—Miss Bursal and Mr. Bursal are come—just coming up stairs.

*Mrs. T.* Then you will be so good, Sir, as to unlock this door.

[*Waiter tries to unlock the door.*]

*Waiter.* It must be bolted on the inside. Chambermaid! Sally! Are you within there? Unbolt this door.

[*Mr. Bursal's voice behind the scenes.*]  
Let me have a basin of good soup directly.

*Waiter.* I'll go round, and have the door unbolted, immediately, ladies.

[*Exit Waiter.*]

*Enter Miss Bursal, in a riding dress, and with a long whip.*

*Miss Burs.* Those devils, the ponies, have a'most pulled my 'and off.—Who 'ave we 'ere? Ha! *Mrs. Talbot!* Louisa! 'ow are ye? I'm so vastly glad to see you:—but I'm so shocked to 'ear of the loss of the Bombay Castle. *Mrs. Talbot,* you look but poorly: but this Montem will put every body in spirits. I 'ear every body's to be 'ere, and my brother tells me 'twill be the finest ever seen at *H'Eton*.—Louisa, my dear, I'm sorry I have not a seat for you in my curricule for to-morrow: but I've promised Lady Betty; so you know, 'tis impossible for me.

*Louisa.* Certainly; and it would be impossible for me to leave my mother at present.

*Chambermaid (opens the bed-chamber door).* The room's ready, now ladies.

*Mrs. Tal.* Miss Bursal—we intrude upon you no longer.

*Miss Burs.* Nay, why do ye decamp, *Mrs. Talbot?* I 'ad a thousand things to say to you, Louisa; but am so tired, and so annoyed—

[*Sits herself—Exeunt Mrs. Talbot, Louisa, and Chambermaid,*]

*Enter Mr. Bursal with a basin of soup in his hand.*

*Mr. Burs.* Well, thank my stars, the *Airly Castle* is safe in the Downs.

*Miss Burs.* Mr. Bursal, can you inform me why Joe, my groom, does not make his appearance?

*Mr. Burs. (eating and speaking.)* Yes, that I can—child—because he is with his 'orses, where he ought to be. 'Tis fit they should be looked after well; for they cost me a pretty penny—more than their heads are worth,

and your's into the bargain: but I was resolved, as we were to come to this Montem, to come in style.

*Miss Burs.* In style, to be sure; for all the world's to be here—the King, and Prince o' Whales, and Duke o' York, and all the first people; and we shall cut such a dash!—Dash!—Dash! will be the word to-morrow!—  
(*playing with her whip.*)

*Mr. Burs.* (*aside*) Dash!—Dash!—aye, just like her brother. He'll pay away, finely, I warrant, by the time he's her age. Well, well, he can afford it; and I do love to see my children make a figure for their money. As Jack Bursal says, what's money for, if it e'nt to make a figure.—(*Aloud*) There's your brother Jack, now, the extravagant dog, he'll have such a dress as never was seen, I suppose, at this here Montem. Why, now, Jack Bursal spends more money at Eton, and has more to spend, than my Lord John, though my Lord John's the son of a marchioness.

*Miss Burs.* O! that makes no difference now a-days. I wonder whether her ladyship is to be at this Montem. The only good I hever got out of those stupid Talbots, was an introduction to their friend lady Piercefield. What she could find to like in the Talbots, heaven knows. I've a notion she'll drop them, when she hears of the loss of the *Bombay Castle*.

*Enter waiter, with a note.*

*Waiter.* A note from my lady Piercefield, Sir.

*Miss B.* Charming woman!—Is she here, pray Sir!

*Wait.* Just come—yes, ma'am.

[*Exit Waiter.*

*Miss B.* Well, Mr. Bursal, what is it?

*Mr. B.* (*reads*) 'Business of importance—to communicate—' Hum—What can it be?—(*going.*)

*Miss B.* (*aside*) Perhaps some match to propose for me!—(*aloud*) Mr. Bursal, pray, before you go to her ladyship, do send my ooman to me to make me *presentable*.

[*Exit Miss Bursal at one door.*

*Mr. B.* (*at the opposite door.*) 'Business of importance'—Hum! I'm glad I'm prepared with a good basin of soup: there's no doing business well upon an empty stomach. Perhaps the business is to lend cash; and I've no great stomach for that: but it will be an honour, to be sure.

[*Exit.*

## SCENE.

## Landlady's parlour.

Landlady—Mr. Finsbury, a man-milliner, with band-boxes—a fancy cap, or helmet with feathers, in the landlady's hand—a satin bag, covered with gold-netting, in the man-milliner's hand—a mantle hanging over his arm—a rough-looking farmer is sitting with his back towards them, eating bread and cheese, and reading a newspaper.

*Landlady.* Well, this, to be sure, will be the best dressed Montem that ever was seen at Eton; and you Lon'on gentlemen have the most fashionable notions; and this is the most elegantest fancy cap—

*Fins.* Why, as you observe, Ma'am, that is the most elegant fancy cap of them all. That is Mr. Hector Hogmorton's fancy cap, Ma'am;—and here, Ma'am, is Mr. Saul's rich satin bag, covered with gold net. He is college salt-bearer, I understand, and has a prodigious superb white and gold dress. But, in my humble opinion, Ma'am, the marshal's white, and purple, and orange fancy-dress trimmed with silver, will bear the bell; though, indeed, I shouldn't say that; for the colonel's and lieutenant's, and ensign's are beautiful in the extreme. And, to be sure, nothing can be better imagined than Mr. Marlborough's lilac and silver, with a Roman cap. And it must be allowed, that nothing in nature can have a better effect than Mr. Drake's flesh colour and blue, with this Spanish hat, Ma'am, you see.

*[The farmer looks over his shoulder from time to time, during this speech, with contempt.]*

*Farmer (reads the newspaper).* French fleet at sea—Hum!

*Landlady.* O, gemini! Mr. Drake's Spanish hat is the sweetest, tasty thing!—Mr. Finsbury, I protest—

*Mr. Fins.* Why, ma'am, I knew a lady of your taste couldn't but approve of it. My own invention, entirely, ma'am.—But it's nothing to the captain's cap, ma'am. Indeed, ma'am, Mr. Wheeler, the captain that is to be, has the prettiest taste in dress. To be sure, his sandals were my suggestion; but the mantle he has the entire credit of, to do him justice; and, when you see it, ma'am,

you will be really surprised ; for, to contrast and elegance, and richness, and lightness, and propriety, and effect, and costume, you've never yet seen any thing at all to be compared to captain Wheeler's mantle, ma'am.

*Farmer (to the landlady).* Why now, pray, Mrs. Landlady, how long may it have been the fashion for milliners to go about in men's clothes ?

*Landlady (aside to farmer).* Lord, Mr. Hearty, hush ! This is Mr. Finsbury, the great man-milliner !

*Farm.* The great man-milliner ! This is a sight I never thought to see in Old England.

*Fins. (packing up band-boxes).* Well ma'am, I'm glad I have your approbation. It has ever been my study to please the ladies.

*Farm. (throws a fancy mantle over his frieze coat).* And is this the way to please the ladies, Mrs. Landlady, now a-days ?

*Fins. (taking off the mantle).* Sir, with your leave—I ask pardon—but the least thing detracts these tender colours ; and as you have just been eating cheese with your hands—

*Farm.* 'Tis my way to eat cheese with my mouth, man.

*Fins. Man !*

*Farm.* I ask pardon—man-milliner, I mean.

*Enter Landlord.*

*Landlord.* Why, wife !

*Landlady.* Wife !

*Landlord.* I ask pardon—Mrs. Newington, I mean—Do you know who them ladies are, that you have been and turned out of the Dolphin ?

*Landlady (alarmed).* Not I, indeed. Who are they, pray ? Why, if they are quality, it's no fault of mine ; it is their own fault, for coming like scrubs, without four horses. Why, if quality will travel the road this way, incognito, how can they expect to be known and treated as quality ! 'Tis no fault of mine : why didn't you find out sooner, who they were, Mr. Newington ? What else, in the 'versal world, have you to do, but to go basking about in the yards and places with your tankard in your hand, from morning to night ?—What have you else to ruminate all day long, but to find out who's who, I say !

*Farm.* Clapper!—clapper!—clapper! like my mill in a high wind, landlord, clapper!—clapper!—clapper!—enough to stun a body—

*Landlord.* That is not used to it;—but use is all—  
they say.

*Landlady.* Will you answer me, Mr. Newington? Who are the grandees, that were in the Dolphin?—and what's become on them?

*Landlord.* Grandees was your own word, wife. They be not to call grandees; but I reckon you'd be sorry not to treat 'em civil, when I tell you their name is Talbot—mother and sister to our young Talbot, of Eton, he that paid me so handsome for the hunter, this very morning.

*Landlady.* Mercy! is that all? What a combustion for nothing in life!

*Fins.* For nothing in life, as you say, Ma'am, that is, nothing in high life, I'm sure, Ma'am, nay, I dare a'most venture to swear: for, would you believe it, Mr. Talbot is one of the few young gentlemen of Eton, that has not bespoke from me a fancy dress for this grand Montem.

*Landlady.* There, Mr. Newington! there's your Mr. Talbot for you! and there's your grandees! O, trust me, I know your scrubs at first sight.

*Landlord.* Scrubs, I don't, nor can't, nor won't call them, that pay their debts honest.—Scrubs, I don't, nor won't, nor can't call them, that behave as handsome as young Mr. Talbot did here to me this morning, about the hunter. A scrub he is not, wife.—Fancy dress or no fancy dress, Mr. Finsbury, this young gentleman is no scrub.

*Fins.* Dear me! 'Twas not I said *scrub*. Did I say scrub?

*Farm.* No matter if you did.

*Fins.* No matter, certainly: and yet it is a matter; for I'm confident I wouldn't, for the world, leave it in any one's power, to say, that I said—that I—called any young gentleman of Eton a *scrub*. Why, you know, Sir, it might breed a riot.

*Farm.* And a pretty figure you'd make in a riot.

*Landlady.* Pray let me hear nothing about riots in my house.



*Farm.* Nor about scrubs.

*Fins.* But I beg leave to explain, gentlemen. All I ventured to remark, or suggest, was, that as there was some talk of Mr. Talbot's being captain to-morrow, I didn't conceive how he could well appear without any dress. That was all, upon my word and honour.—A good morning to you gentlemen; it is time for me to be off.—Mrs. Newington, you were so obliging, to promise to accommodate me with a return chaise as far as Eton.

[*Finsbury bows and exit.*]

*Farm.* A good day to you and your handboxes. There's a fellow for you now! Ha! ha! ha!—A man-milliner, forsooth!

*Landlord* Mrs. Talbot's coming—stand back.

*Landlady.* Lord! why does Bob shew them through this way?

*Enter Mrs. Talbot, leaning on Louisa, waiter shewing the way.*

*Landlady.* You are going on, I suppose, Ma'am.

*Waiter (aside, to landlord).* Not if she could help it; but there's no beds since Mr. Bursal and Miss Bursal's come.

*Landlord.* I say nothing, for 'tis in vain to say more.—But isn't it a pity she can't stay for the Montem, poor old lady! Her son—as good and fine a lad as ever you saw—they say, has a chance, too, of being captain. She may never live to see another such a sight.

[*As Mrs. Talbot walks slowly on, the farmer puts himself across her way, so as to stop her short.*]

*Farm.* No offence, madam, I hope; but I have a good snug farm-house, not far off hand, and if so you'd be so good to take a night's lodging, you and the young lady with you, you'd have a hearty welcome—that's all I can say—and you'd make my wife very happy, for she's a good woman, to say nothing of myself.

*Landlord.* If I may be so bold to put in my word, madam, you'd have as good beds, and be as well lodged with farmer Hearty, as in e'er house at Salt Hill.

*Mrs. Talb* I am very much obliged—

*Farm.* O, say nothing o' that, madam; I am sure I shall be as much obliged, if you do come.—Do, Miss, speak for me.

*Louisa.* Pray, dear mother——

*Farm.* She will. (*calls behind the scenes*) Here, waiter! hostler! driver! what's your name, drive the chaise up here to the door, smart, close.—Lean on my arm, madam, and we'll have you in and at home in a whiff.

[*Exeunt, Mrs. Talbot, Louisa, farmer, land'ord, and waiter.*

*Landlady sola.*

Lord, what a noise and a rout this farmer man makes! And my husband, with his great broad face, bowing, as great a nincompoop as t'other. 'The folks are all bewitched with the old woman, I verily believe. (*aloud*) A good morning to you ladies.

*End of the first act.*

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## SECOND ACT.

### SCENE I.

A field near Eton College—several boys crossing backwards and forwards in the back ground—In front, Talbot, Wheeler, Lord John, and Bursal.

*Talb.* Fair play, Wheeler! Have at 'em, my boy!—There they stand, fair game!—There's Bursal there with his *dead* forty-five votes at command; and Lord John with his—how many live friends?

*Lord J. (coolly)* Sir, I have fifty-six friends, I believe.

*Talb.* Fifty-six friends, his Lordship believes—Wheeler inclusive, no doubt.

*Lord J.* That's as hereafter may be.

*Wheel.* Hereafter! O, fie, my *Lud!*—You know your own Wheeler has, from the first minute he ever saw you, been your fast friend.

*Talb.* Your fast friend from the first minute he ever saw you, my Lord! That's well hit, Wheeler; stick to that; stick fast.—Fifty-six friends, Wheeler *inclusive*, hey, my Lord, hey my *Lud!*

*Lord J.* Talbot *exclusive*, I find, contrary to my expectations.

*Talb.* Aye, contrary to your expectations, you find that Talbot is not a dog, that will lick the dust: but then,

there's enough of the true spaniel breed to be had for whistling for, hey Wheeler.

*Bursal (aside to Wheeler).* A damn'd bad electioneerer!—So much the better for you, Wheeler. Why, unless he bought a vote, he'd never win one, if he talked from this to the day of judgment.

*Wheeler (aside to Bursal).* And as he has no money to buy votes—He! he! he!—we are safe enough.

*Talb.* That's well done, Wheeler; fight the bye battle there with Bursal, now you are sure of the main with Lord John.

*Lord J.* Sure!—I never made Mr. Wheeler any promise yet.

*Wheeler.* O, I ask no promise from his Lordship: we are upon honour: I trust entirely to his Lordship's good nature and generosity, and to his regard for his own family, I having the honour, though distantly, to be related.

*Lord J. Related!*—How, Wheeler?

*Wheel.* Connected, I mean, which is next door, as I may say, to being related—related slipt out by mistake—I beg pardon, my Lord John.

*Lord J. Related!* A strange mistake, Wheeler.

*Talb.* Overshot yourself, Wheeler—overshot yourself, by all that's awkward. And yet, till now, I always took you for 'a dead shot at a yellow hammer.'<sup>\*</sup>

*Wheeler (taking Bursal by the arm).* Bursal a word with you—(*aside to Bursal*) What a lump of family pride that Lord John is!

*Talb.* Keep out of my hearing, Wheeler, lest I should spoil sport. But never fear, you'll please Bursal sooner than I shall—I can't for the soul of me, bring myself to say, that Bursal's not purse-proud, and you can—Give you joy!—

*Burs.* A choice electioneerer! Ha! ha! ha!

*Wheel. (faintly)* He! he! he!—a choice electioneerer, as you say—

[*Exeunt Wheeler and Bursal.*  
*Manent Lord J. and Talbot.*

\* Young noblemen at Oxford, wear yellow tufts at the tops of their caps. Hence their flatterers are said to be dead shots at a yellow-hammer.

*Lord J.* There was a time, Talbot—

*Talb.* There was a time my Lord—to save trouble and a long explanation—there was a time when you liked Talbots better than spaniels—you understand me.

*Lord J.* I have found it very difficult, to understand you of late, Mr. Talbot.

*Talb.* Yes, because you have used other people's understandings instead of your own—Be yourself, my Lord—See with your own eyes, and hear with your own ears, and then you'll find me still what I've been these seven years—not your understrapper, your hanger-on, your flatterer, but—your friend—If you choose to have me for a friend, here's my hand—I am your friend—and you'll not find a better.

*Lord J.* (*giving his hand*). You are a strange fellow, Talbot, I thought I never could have forgiven you for what you said last night.

*Talb.* What?—for I don't keep a register of my sayings—O, it was something about gaming—Wheeler was flattering your taste for it, and he put me into a passion—I forgot what I said—But whatever it was, I'm sure it was well meant, and, I believe, it was well said.

*Lord J.* But you laugh at me sometimes to my face.

*Talb.* Would you rather I should laugh at you behind your back?

*Lord J.* But of all things in the world, I hate to be laughed at.—Listen to me—and don't fumble in your pockets while I am talking to you.

*Talb.* I'm fumbling for—O here it is—Now, Lord John, I once did laugh at you behind your back, and what's droll enough, it was *at your back* I laughed—Here's a caricatura I drew of you—I really am sorry I did it—But 'tis best to shew it to you myself.

*Lord J.* (*aside*) It is all I can do to forgive this—(*after a pause he tears the paper*) I have heard of this caricatura before—but I did not expect, that you would come and shew it to me yourself, Talbot, so handsomely—especially at such a time as this—Wheeler might well say you are a bad electioneerer.

*Talb.* O hang it! I forgot my election, and your fifty-six friends.

*Enter Rory O'Ryan.*

*Rory (claps Talbot on the back).* Fifty-six friends have you Talbot?—Say seven—fifty-seven I mean, for I'll lay ye a wager you've forgot me, and that's a shame for you too, for out of the whole posse-comitatus entirely new, you have not a stauncher friend than poor little Rory O'Ryan—And a good right he has to befriend you, for you stood by him, when many, that ought to have known better, were hunting him down for a wild Irishman—Now that same wild Irishman has as much gratitude in him as any tame Englishman of them all—But don't let's be talking *sintimint*, for for my share, I'd not give a bog-berry a bushel for *sintimint* when I could get any thing better—

*Lord J.* And pray, Sir, what may a bogberry be?

*Rory.* Phoo! don't be playing the innocent, now.—Where have you lived all your life (I ask pardon my Lord) not to know a bogberry when you see it, or hear of it. (*turns to Talbot*) But what are ye standing idling here for?—Sure there's Wheeler, and Bursal along with him, canvassing out yonder at a terrible fine rate. And haven't I been huzzaing for you there till I'm hoarse? so I am, and just stepped away to suck an orange for my voice, (*sucks an orange.*) I am a *thorough-going* friend at any rate.

*Talb.* Now, Rory, you are the best fellow in the world, and a *thorough-going* friend; but have a care, or you'll get yourself and me into some scrape, before you have done with this violent *thorough-going* work.

*Rory.* Never fear! never fear, man!—a warm *frind* and a bitter enemy, that's my maxim.

*Talb.* Yes, but too warm a friend is as bad as a bitter enemy.

*Rory.* O! never fear me! I'm as cool as a cucumber all the time; and whilst they *tink* I am *tinking* of nothing in life but making a noise, I make my own little snug remarks in prose and verse as—now my voice is after coming back to me, you shall hear if you *plase*.

*Rory.* I do please.

*Talb.* I call it—Rory's song.—Now mind, I have a verse for every body, o' the leading lads I mean, and I shall put 'em in or *lave* 'em out according to their incli-

nations and deserts, *wis a-wee* to you, my little *frind*. So you comprehend it will be Rory's song with variations.

(*Talbot and Lord John*.) Let's have it—let us have it without farther preface.

*Rory sings.*

'I'm true game to the last, and no *Wheeler* for me.'

*Rory*. There's a stroke in the first place for *Wheeler*, you take it.

*Talb*. O yes, yes, we take it; go on.

*Rory sings.*

'I'm true game to the last, and no *Wheeler* for me.

Of all birds, beasts or fishes that swim in the sea,  
Webb'd or finn'd, black or white, man or child, Whig or  
Tory,

None but *Talbot*, O, *Talbot's* the dog for *Rory*.'

*Talb*. *Talbot the dog* is much obliged to you.

*Lord J*. But if I have any ear, one of your lines is a foot to long, Mr. O'Ryan.

*Rory*. Phoo but the best foot foremost for a *frind*. Slur it in the singing,—and dont be quarrelling any how for a foot more or less—the more feet the better it will stand, you know—Only let me go on, and you'll come to something that will *plase* you.

*Rory sings.*

'Then there's he with a purse that's as long as my arm.'

*Rory*. That's *Bursal*, mind now, in this verse I mean to allude to.

*Lord J*. If the allusion's good, we shall probably find out your meaning.

*Talb*. On with you, *Rory*, and don't read us notes on a song.

*Lord J*. Go on, and let us hear what you say of *Bursal*.

*Rory sings.*

'Then there's he with the purse that's as long as my arm,  
His father's a tanner, but then where's the harm?  
Heir to houses and hunters, and horseponds in fee,  
Won't his skins sure soon buy him a pedigree.'

*Lord J*. Encore! encore! why *Rory*, I did not think you could make so good a song

*Rory*. Sure, 'twas none of I made it—'twas *Talbot* here.

*Talb.* I!

*Rory.* (*aside*) Not a word—I'll make you a present of it, sure then it's your own.

*Talb.* I never wrote a word of it.

*Rory* (*to Lord J.*) Phoo! phoo! he's only denying it out of false modesty.

*Lord J.* Well no matter who wrote it, sing it again.

*Rory.* Be easy—So I will, and as many more verses as you will to the back of it. (*Winking at Talbot aside*) You shall have the credit of all. (*Aloud*) Put me in when I'm out, Talbot, and you (*to Lord John*) Join—Join.

(*Rory sings, and Lord John sings with him.*)

'Then there's he with the purse that's as long as my arm,  
His father's a tanner, but then where's the harm?  
Heir to houses and hunters, and horseponds in fee,  
Won't his skins sure soon buy him a pedigree.

There's my lord with the back that never was bent.'

(*Lord John stops singing—Talbot makes signs to Rory to stop, but Rory does not see him, and sings on.*)

'There's my lord with the back that never was bent,  
Let him live with his ancestors, I am content.'

(*Rory pushes Lord J. and Talbot with his elbows.*)

*Rory.* Join, join, both of ye—why don't you join (*sings*).

'Who'll buy my Lord John, the arch fishwoman cried,  
A nice oyster shut up in a choice shell of pride.'

*Rory.* But join, or ye spoil all.

*Talb.* You have spoiled all indeed.

*Lord J.* (*making a formal low bow.*) Mr. Talbot, Lord John thanks you.

*Rory.* Lord John! Blood and thunder! I forgot you were by—quite and clean.

*Lord J.* (*puts him aside, and continues speaking to Talbot.*) Lord John thanks you, Mr. Talbot—This is the second part of the caricatura—Lord John thanks you for these proofs of friendship—Lord John has reason to thank you, Mr. Talbot.

*Rory.* No reason in life now—Don't be thanking so much for nothing in life, or if you must be thanking o' somebody, it's me you ought to thank.

*Lord J.* I ought and do, Sir, for unmasking one who—

*Talb.* (*warmly*) Unmasking my lord—

*Rory* (*holding them asunder.*) Phoo! phoo! phoo! be easy, can't ye—there's no unmasking at all in the case—My Lord John, Talbot's writing the song was all a mistake.

*Lord J.* As much a mistake as your singing it, Sir, I presume—

*Rory.* Just as much—'Twas all a mistake—So now don't you go and make a mistake into a misunderstanding—It was I made every word of the song *out o' the face\**—that about the back that never was bent, and the ancestors, and the oyster and all—He did not write a word of it, upon my conscience I wrote it all—tho' I'll engage you did'nt think I could write such a good thing.

(*Lord John turns away.*)

I'm telling you the truth and not a word of lie, yet you won't believe me.

*Lord J.* You will excuse me, Sir, if I cannot believe two contradictory assertions within two minutes—Mr. Talbot, I thank you. (*going*)

(*Rory tries to stop Lord John from going, but cannot—Exit Lord John.*)

*Rory.* Well if he *will* go, let him go then, and much good may it do him—Nay, but don't you go too.

*Talb.* O, *Rory*, what have you done!

(*Talbot runs after Lord J.*)

*Talb.* Hear me, my Lord. (*Exit Talbot.*)

*Rory.* Hear him! hear him! hear him!—Well I'm point blank mad with myself for making this blunder—but how could I help it?—As sure as ever I am meaning to do the best thing on earth, it turns out the worst—

(*Enter a party of lads huzzaing.*)

*Rory* (*joins.*) Huzza!—Huzza!—Who pray are ye huzzaing for?—

*1st Boy.* Wheeler! Wheeler for ever! Huzza—

*Rory.* Talbot! Talbot for ever! Huzza—Captain Talbot for ever! Huzza.

*2d Boy.* Captain he'll never be, at least not to-morrow, for Lord John has just declared for Wheeler.

*1st Boy.* And that turns the scale.

*Rory.* O, the scale may turn back again.

*3d Boy.* Impossible! Lord John has just given his *promise* to Wheeler—I heard him with my own ears.

\* From beginning to end.



(*Several speak at once*). And I heard him, and I!—and I!—and I!—Huzza! Wheeler for ever.

*Rory*. Oh murder! murder! murder! (*aside*) this goes to my heart—It's all my doing—O my poor Talbot! murder! murder! murder!—But I won't let them see me cast down, and it is good to huzzaing at all events—Huzza for Talbot!—Talbot for ever! Huzza—  
[*Exit.*]

(*Enter Wheeler and Bursal.*)

*Wheel*. Who was that huzzaing for Talbot?

(*Rory behind the scenes, 'Huzza for Talbot?—Talbot for ever! Huzza.'*)

*Bur*. Phoo, it is only Rory O'Ryan, or the roaring lion, as I call him—Ha! ha! ha! Rory O'Ryan, alias roaring lion—that's a good one—put it about—Rory O'Ryan the roaring lion ha! ha! ha!—but you don't take it—you don't laugh, Wheeler.

*Wheel*. Ha! ha! ha! O, upon my honour I do laugh, ha! ha! ha! (*It is the hardest work to laugh at his wit.*) Rory O'Ryan the roaring lion, ha! ha! ha!—You know I always laugh, Bursal, at your jokes, he! he! he! ready to kill myself.

*Burs*. (*sullenly*) You are easily killed then, if that much laughing will do the business.

*Wheel*. (*coughing*) Just then—something—stuck in my throat—I beg your pardon.

*Burs*. (*still sullen*) O, you need not beg my pardon about the matter—I don't care whether you laugh or no—not I—Now you have got Lord John to declare for you, you are above laughing at my jokes, I suppose.

*Wheel*. No; upon my word and honour I *did* laugh.

*Burs*. (*aside*) A fig for your word and honour. (*aloud*) I know I'm of no consequence now—But you'll remember that if his lordship has the honour of making you Captain, he must have the honour to pay for your Captain's accoutrements—for I shan't pay the piper, I promise you, since I'm of no consequence.

*Wheel*. Of no consequence! but my dear Bursal, what could put that into your head—that's the strangest, oddest fancy—of no consequence! Bursal of no consequence! why every body that knows any thing, every body that has seen Bursal-house, knows that

you are of the greatest consequence, my dear Bursal.

*Burs.* (taking out his watch, and opening it, looks at it.) No, I'm of no consequence—I wonder that rascal Finsbury is not come yet with the dresses. (still looking at his watch.)

*Wheel.* (aside) If Bursal takes it into his head not to lend me the money to pay for my Captain's dress—What will become of me? for I have not a shilling—and Lord John wont pay for me—and Finsbury has orders not to leave the house, till he is paid by every body—What will become of me? (Bites his nails.)

*Burs.* (aside) How I love to make him bite his nails!—(aloud) I know I'm of no consequence—(strikes his repeater.)

*Wheel.* What a fine repeater that is of your's, Bursal!—It is the best I ever heard.

*Burs.* So it well may be, for it cost a mint of money.

*Wheel.* No matter to you what any thing costs—Happy dog as you are! you roll in money—and yet you talk of being of no consequence.

*Burs.* But I am not of half so much consequence as Lord John—am I?

*Wheel.* Are you? why aren't you twice as rich as he?

*Burs.* Very true, but I'm not purse-proud.

*Wheel.* You purse-proud! I should never have thought of such a thing.

*Burs.* Nor I, if Talbot had not used the word.

*Wheel.* But Talbot thinks every body purse-proud, that has a purse.

*Burs.* (aside) Well, this Wheeler does put one into good humour with one's self in spite of one's teeth. (aloud) Talbot says blunt things, but I don't think he's what you can call clever—Hey, Wheeler?

*Wheel.* Clever! O, not he.

*Burs.* I think I could walk round him.

*Wheel.* To be sure you could—Why do you know I've quizzed him famously myself within this quarter of an hour.

*Burs.* Indeed!—I wish I had been by.

*Wheel.* So do I faith—It was the best thing—I wanted, you see, to get him out of my way, that I might have

the field clear for electioneering to-day.—So I bowls up to him with a long face—such a face as this—Mr. Talbot, do you know—I'm sorry to tell you, here's Jack Smith has just brought the news from Salt Hill—Your mother in getting into the carriage, slipt and has *broke* her leg, and there she's lying at a farm house, two miles off—Is not it true, Jack? said I—I saw the farmer helping her in with my own eyes, cried Jack—Off goes Talbot like an arrow.—*Quizzed* him by G—, said I.

*Burs.* Ha! ha! ha! quizzed him by G—, with all his cleverness—that was famously done.

*Wheel.* Ha! ha! ha! with all his cleverness he will be all evening hunting for the farm house and the mother that has *broke* her leg—So he is out of our way.

*Burs.* But what need have you to want him out of your way, now Lord John has come over to your side—you have the thing so dead.

*Wheel.* Not so dead neither---for there's a great independent party, you know, and if *you* don't help me, Bursal, to canvass them, I shall be no Captain—It is you I depend upon after all—Will you come and canvass them with me?—Dear Bursal pray—All depends upon you. (*pulls him by the arm—Bursal follows.*)

*Burs.* Well, if all depends upon me, I'll see what I can do for you. (*aside*) Then I am of some consequence—money makes a man of some consequence, I see—with some folk.

## SCENE.

In the back scene a flock of sheep are seen penned. In front, a party of country lads and lasses gaily dressed, as in sheep-sheering time, with ribbands and garlands of flowers, &c. are dancing and singing.\*

\* \* \* \* \*

*Enter Patty, dressed as the Queen of the festival—She has a lamb in her arms—The dancers break off when she comes in; and one exclaims—*

*1st Peasant.* O, here comes Patty! Here comes the

\* The young reader is requested to insert here any song suitable to the occasion. The author tried to write one; but, as she could not write one that pleased herself, she omitted it.

Queen o' the day.—What has kept you from us so long, Patty?

*2d. Peas.* Please your Majesty, you should say.

*Patty.* This poor little lamb of mine was what kept me so long. It strayed away from the rest; and I should have lost him, so I should, for ever, if it had not been for a good young gentleman.—Yonder he is, talking to farmer Hearty.—That's the young gentleman, who pulled my lamb out of the ditch for me, into which he had fallen—Pretty creature!

*1st Peas.* Pretty creature, or your Majesty, which ever you choose to be called—come and dance with them, and I'll carry your lamb.

[*Exeunt singing and dancing.*]

*Enter Farmer Hearty and Talbot.*

*Farm.* Why, young gentleman, I'm glad I happened to light upon you here, and so to hinder you from going farther astray, and to set your heart at ease, like.

*Talb.* Thanks, good farmer; you have set my heart at ease, indeed: but the truth is, they did frighten me confoundedly. More fool I.

*Farm.* No fool at all, to my notion. I should, at your age, aye, or at my age, just the self-same way, have been frightened myself, if so be that mention had been made to me that way, of my own mother's having broke her leg, or so—And greater, by a great deal, the shame for them that frighted you, than for you to be frighted.—How young gentlemen, now, can bring themselves for to like to tell such lies, is to me, now, a matter of amazement, like, that I can't get over, no ways.

*Talb.* O, farmer, such lies are very witty, though you and I don't just now like the wit of them. This is fun, this is *quizzing*; but you don't know what we young gentlemen mean by *quizzing*.

*Farm.* Aye, but I do though, to my cost, ever since last year. Look you, now, at yon fine field of wheat.—Well, it was just as fine, and finer, last year, till a young Eton jackanapes—

*Talb.* Take care what you say, farmer; for I am a young Eton jackanapes.

*Farm.* No, but you be not the young Eton jackanapes, that I'm a thinking on—I tell you, it was this time last

year, man; he was a horseback, I tell ye, mounted upon a fine bay hunter, out o' hunting, like.

*Talb.* I tell you, it was this time last year, man, that I was mounted upon a fine bay hunter, out a hunting.

*Farm.* Zooks! would you argufy a man out of his wits? You won't go for to tell me, that you are that impertinent little jackanapes.

*Talb.* No! no! I'll not tell you, that I am an impertinent little jackanapes.

*Farm.* (*wiping his forehead.*) Well don't then, for I can't believe it; and you put me out. Where was I?

*Talb.* Mounted upon a fine bay hunter!

*Farm.* Aye, so he was. Here *you*, says he, meaning me—open this gate for me.—Now, if he had but a spoke me fair, I would not have gainsayed him; but he falls to swearing; so I bid him open the gate for himself.—'There's a bull behind you, farmer,' says he—I turns—'Quizzed him, by G—,' cries my jackanapes; and off he gallops him, through the very thick of my corn: but he got a fall leaping the ditch, out yonder, which pacified me, like, at the minute. So I goes up to see whether he was killed; but he was not a whit the worse for his tumble. So I should ha' fell into a passion with him then, to be sure, about my corn, but his horse had got such a terrible sprain, I couldn't say any thing to him, for I was a pitying the poor animal. As fine a hunter as ever you saw! I am sartain sure he could never come to good after.

*Talb.* (*aside*) I do think, from the description, that this was Wheeler: and I have paid for the horse which he spoiled! (*Aloud*) Should you know either the man or the horse again, if you were to see them, farmer?

*Farm.* Aye, that I should, to my dying day.

*Talb.* Will you come with me, then, and you'll do me some guineas worth of service.

*Farm.* Aye, that I will, with a deal of pleasure; for you be a civil-spoken young gentleman, and, besides, I don't think the worse on you for being *frighted* a little about your mother; being what I might ha' been at your age, myself; for I had a mother myself once. So lead on, master.

[*Exeunt.*]

*End of the second Act.*

## ACT THE THIRD.

## SCENE I.

The Garden of the Windmill Inn, at Salt Hill.

Miss Bursal, Mrs. Newington, Sally the chambermaid.

[*Miss Bursal, very much dressed, is sitting on a garden stool, and leans her head against the landlady, as if fainting—Sally holds a glass of water and a smelling-bottle.*

*Miss B.* Where am I? Where am I?

*Landlady.* At the Windmill at Salt Hill, young lady; and ill or well you can't be better.

*Sally.* Do you find yourself better since coming into the air, Miss?

*Miss B.* Better! Oh, I never shall be better.

[*Leans her head on her hand, and rocks herself backwards and forwards.*

*Landlady.* My dear young lady, don't take on so. (*Aside*) Now would I give somewhat to know what it was my lady Piercefield said to the father, and what the father said to this one, and what's the matter at the bottom of affairs.—Sally, did you hear any thing at the doors.

*Sally.* (*aside*) No, indeed, ma'am; I never be's at the doors.

*Landl.* (*aside*) Simpleton!—(*Aloud*) But, my dear Miss Bursal—if I may be so bold—if you'd only disembosom your mind of what's on it—

*Miss B.* Disembosom my mind! Nonsense! I've nothing on my mind. Pray, leave me, madam.

*Landlady.* (*aside*) Madam, indeed!—Madam, forsooth! O, I'll make her pay for that. That *madam* shall go down in the bill, as sure as my name's Newington.

*Landlady.* Well, I wish you better, ma'am. I suppose I'd best send your own servant?

*Miss B.* (*sullenly*) Yes, I suppose so.—(*to Sally*)—You need not wait, child, nor look so curious.

*Sally.* *Cur'ous!* Indeed, Miss, if I look a little *cur'ous*, or so. (*looking at her dress*) 'tis only because I was *frighted* to see you take on, which made me forget my clean apron, when I came out; and this apron—

*Miss B.* Hush! hush! child:—Don't tell me about

clean aprons, nor run on with your vulgar talk. Is there ever a seat one can set on in that *harbour* yonder.

*Sally.* Oh, dear 'art, yes, Miss, 'tis the pleasantest *harbour* on *hearth*. Be pleased to lean on *my harm*, and you'll soon be there.

*Miss. B. (going)* Then, tell my woman she need not come to me, and let nobody *interude* on me—do ye 'ear? (*Aside*) O, what will become of me! and the Talbots will soon know it!—And the ponies and the curricule, and the vis-a-vis—what will become of them? and how shall I make my appearance at the Montem, or any *ware* else?

## SCENE II.

Lord John—Wheeler—Bursal.

*Wheel.* Well, but my lord—Well, but Bursal—though my lady Piercefield—though Miss Bursal is come to Salt Hill, you won't leave us all at sixes and sevens. What can we do without you?

*L. J.* You can do very well without *me*.

*Burs.* You can do very well without *me*.

*Wheel. (to Burs.)* Impossible!—impossible; you know Mr. Finsbury will be here just now, with the dresses; and we have to try them on.

*Burs.* And to pay for them.

*Wheel.* And to settle about the procession.—And then, my lord, the election is to come on this evening; you won't go till that's over, as your lordship has *promised* me your lordship's vote and interest.

*Lord J.* My vote I promised you, Mr. Wheeler; but I said not a syllable about my *interest*. My friends, perhaps, have not been offended, though I have, by Mr Talbot. I shall leave them to their own inclinations.

*Bursal (whistling).* Wheugh! wheugh! wheigh!—Wheeler, the principal's nothing without the interest.

*Wheel.* O, the interest will go along with the principal, of course; for, I'm persuaded, if my lord leaves his friends to their inclinations, it will be the inclination of my lord's friends to vote as he does, if he says nothing to them to the contrary.

*Lord J.* I told you, Mr. Wheeler, that I should leave them to themselves,

*Burs.* (*still whistling.*) Well, I'll do my best to make that father of mine send me off to Oxford. I'm sure I'm fit to go—along with Wheeler. Why, you'd best be my tutor, Wheeler!—a devilish good thought.

*Wheel.* An excellent thought.

*Burs.* And a cursed fine dust we should kick up at Oxford with your Montem money and all!—Money's *the go*, after all. I wish it was come to my making you my last bow, 'ye distant spires, ye *antic* towers!'

*Wheel.* (*aside to Lord J.*) 'Ye *antic* towers!—fit for Oxford, my lord!

*Lord J.* *Antique* towers, I suppose, Mr. Bursal means.

*Burs.* Antique, to be sure! I said antique, did not I Wheeler?

*Wheel.* O, yes.

*Lord J.* (*aside*) What a mean animal is this!

*Enter Rory O'Ryan.*

*Rory.* Why, now, what's become of Talbot, I want to know? There he is not to be found any where in the wide world; and there's a hullabaloo amongst his friends for him.

[*Wheeler and Bursal wink at one another.*]

*Wheel.* We know nothing of him.

*Lord J.* I have not the honour, Sir, to be one of Mr. Talbot's friends. It is his own fault, and I am sorry for it.

*Rory.* Faith, so am I, especially as it is mine—fault I mean—and especially as the election is just going to come on.

*Enter a party of boys, who cry,* Finsbury's come—Finsbury's come with the dresses.

*Wheel.* Finsbury's come! O, let us see the dresses, and let us try them on to-night.

*Burs.* (*pushing the crowd.*) On with ye—On with ye, there!—Let's try 'em on!—Try 'em on—I'm to be colonel.

*1st. boy.* And I lieutenant.

*2d. boy.* And I ensign.

*3d. boy.* And I college salt-bearer,

*4th. boy.* And I oppident

*5th. boy.* O, what a pity I'm in mourning!

*Several speak at once.* And we are servitors—we are to be the eight servitors.



*Wheel.* And I am to be your captain, I hope. Come on, my colonel—(to *Bursal*) My lord, you are coming.

*Rory.* By and by—I've a word in his ear, by your lave and his.

*Burs.* Why, what the devil stops the way there?—Push on—On with them.

*6th boy.* I'm marshal.

*Burs.* On with ye—on with ye—who cares what you are?

*Wheeler* (to *Bursal* *aside*). You'll pay Finsbury for me, you rich Jew?—(to *Lord John*) Your lordship will remember your lordship's promise.

*Lord J.* I do not usually forget my promises, Sir; and therefore need not to be reminded of them.

*Wheel.* I beg pardon—I beg ten thousand pardons, my lord.

*Burs.* (taking him by the arm.) Come on, man, and don't stand begging pardon there, or I'll leave you.

*Wheel.* (to *Burs.*) I beg pardon, *Bursal*—I beg pardon ten thousand times.

[*Exeunt.*

*Manent, Lord John and Rory O'Ryan.*

*Rory.* Wheugh!—Now, put the case, if I was going to be hanged, for the life of me, I couldn't be after begging so many pardons for nothing at all. But many men, many minds.—(Hums) True game to the last! No *Wheeler* for me. O, murder! I forgot I was nigh letting the cat out o' the bag again.

*Lord J.* You had something to say to me, Sir; I wait till your recollection returns.

*Rory.* Faith, and that's very kind of you; and if you had always done so, you would never have been offended with me, my lord.

*Lord J.* You are mistaken, Mr. O'Ryan, if you think, that you did or could offend me.

*Rory.* Mistaken I was, then, sure enough: but we are all liable to mistakes, and should forget and forgive one another—that's the way to go through the world.

*Lord J.* You will go through the world your own way, Mr. O'Ryan, and allow me to go through it my way.

*Rory.* Very fair—fair enough—then we shan't cross.—But now to come to the point—I don't like to be mak-

ing disagreeable retrospects, if I could any way avoid it; not to be going about the bush, especially at this time a-day, when, as Mr. Finsbury's come, we've not so much time, as we had, to lose. It is true, then, my lord, the report that is going about this hour past, that you have gone in a huff, and given your promise there to that sneaking Wheeler, to vote for him, now?

*Lord J.* In answer to your question, Sir, I am to inform you, that I *have* promised Mr. Wheeler to vote for him.

*Rory.* In a huff?—Aye, now, there it is!—Well, when a man's *mad*, to be sure, he's mad—and that's all that can be said about it. And I know, if I had been *mad* myself, I might have done a foolish thing as well as another. But now, my lord, that you are not mad—

*Lord J.* I protest, Sir, I cannot understand you. In one word, Sir, I'm neither mad nor a fool.—Your most obedient. (*going angrily.*)

*Rory (holding him).* Take care, now, you are going mad with me again.—But, phoo! I like ye the better for being mad. I'm very often mad myself, and I would not give a potatoe for one that had never been mad in his life,

*Lord J. (aside)* He'll not be quiet till he makes me knock him down.

*Rory.* Agh! agh! agh! I begin to guess whereabouts I am at last—*Mad*, in your country, I take it, means fit for Bedlam; but with us in Ireland, now, 'tis no such thing. It means nothing in life but the being in a passion.—Well, one comfort is, my lord, as you're a bit of a scholar, we have the Latin proverb in our favour, '*Ira furor brevis est.*' Anger's short madness.—The shorter the better, I think. So, my lord, to put an end to whatever of the kind you may have felt against poor Talbot, I'll assure you he's as innocent o' that unfortunate song as the babe unborn.

*Lord J.* It is rather late for Mr. Talbot to make apologies to me.

*Rory.* He make apologies! Nct he, faith: he'd send me to Coventry, or, may be, to a worse place, did he but know I was condescending to make this bit of an explanation unknown to him. But, upon my conscience, I've

a regard for ye both, and don't like to see you go together by the ears.—Now, look you, my lord—by this book, and all the books that were ever shut and opened, he never saw or heard of that unlucky song of mine, till I came out with it this morning.

*Lord J.* But you told me this morning, that it was he wrote it.

*Rory.* For that I take shame to myself, as it turned out; but it was only a *white* lie to sarve a friend, and make him cut a dash with a new song at election time. But I've done for ever with white lies.

*Lord J.* (*walking about as if agitated.*) I wish you had never begun with them, Mr. O'Ryan. This may be a good joke to you; but it is none to me or Talbot.—So Talbot never wrote a word of the song?

*Rory.* Not a word, or syllable, good or bad.

*Lord J.* And I have given my promise, to vote against him. He'll lose his election!

*Rory.* Not if you'll give me leave to speak to your friends, in your name.

*Lord J.* I have promised to leave them to themselves, and Wheeler, I am sure, has engaged them by this time.

*Rory.* Bless my body! I'll not stay prating here then.

[*Exit Rory.*]

*Lord J.* (*follows.*) But what can have become of Talbot? I have been too hasty for once in my life.—Well, I shall suffer for it more than any body else; for I love Talbot, since he did not make the song, of which I hate to think.

[*Exit.*]

## SCENE.

A large hall in Eton College—A stair-case at the end—Eton Lads dressed in their Montem Dresses in back Scene—In front, Wheeler (dressed as Captain), Bursal, and Finsbury.

*Fins.* I give you infinite credit, Mr. Wheeler, for this dress.

*Burs.* *Infinite credit!* Why, he'll have no objection to that, hey, Wheeler?—But I thought Finsbury knew you too well, to give you credit for any thing.

*Fins.* You are pleased to be pleasant, Sir, Mr. Whee-

ler knows, in that sense of the word, it is out of my power to give him credit, and I'm sure he would not ask it.

*Wheel.* (*aside*) O, Bursal, pay him; and I'll pay you to-morrow.

*Burs.* Now, if you weren't to be captain after all, Wheeler, what a pretty figure you'd cut. Ha! ha! ha! —Hey?

*Wheel.* O, I am as sure of being captain, as of being alive.—(*aside*) Do pay for me, now,—there's a good dear fellow, before *they* (*looking back*) come up.

*Burs.* (*aside*) I love to make him lick the dust—(*aloud*) Hollo! Here's Finsbury waiting to be paid, lads.—(*to the lads who are in the back scene.*)—Who has paid, and who has not paid, I say?

*The lads come forward, and several exclaim at once,*  
I've paid! I've paid!

*Enter Lord John and Rory O'Ryan.*

*Rory.* O, King of Glory, how fine we are! Why, now, to look at ye all, one might fancy one's self at the play-house at once, or at a fancy ball in dear little Dublin.—Come strike up a dance.

*Burs.* Pshaw! Wherever you come Rory O'Ryan, no one else can be heard. Who has paid, and who has not paid, I say.

*Several boys exclaim,* We've all paid.

*1st boy* I've not paid, but here's my money.

*Several boys.* We have not paid, but here's our money.

*6th boy.* Order, there! I am marshal. All that have paid, march off to the stair-case, and take your seats there, one by one.—March.

[*As they march by, one by one, so as to display their dresses, Mr. Finsbury bows, and says,*

A thousand thanks, gentlemen—Thank you, gentlemen—Thanks, gentlemen.—The finest sight ever I saw out of Lon'on.

*Rory, as each lad passes, catches his arm, 'Are you a Talbotite, or a Wheelerite?'*—To each who answers *A Wheelerite*, Rory replies, 'Phoo—dance off, then—Go to the devil and shake yourself.\*'—Each who answers *A Talbotite*, Rory shakes by the hand violently, singing,

'Talbot, O, Talbot's the dog for Rory.'

\* This is the name of a country dance.

*When they have almost all passed, Lord John says, But where can Mr Talbot be all this time?*

*Burs.* Who knows? Who cares?

*Wheel.* A pretty electioneerer!—(*aside to Bursal*) Finsbury's waiting to be paid.

*Lord J.* You don't wait for me, Mr. Finsbury. You know I have settled with you.

*Fins.* Yes, my lord—yes. Many thanks; and I have left your lordship's dress here, and every body's dress, I believe, as bespoke.

*Burs.* Here Finsbury's the money for Wheeler, who, between you and I, is as poor as a rat.

*Wheeler* (*affecting to laugh*). Well, I hope I shall be as rich as Jew to-morrow.

[*Bursal counts money in an ostentatious manner into Finsbury's hand.*]

*Fins.* A thousand thanks for all favours.

*Rory.* You'll be kind enough to *lave* Mr. Talbot's dress with me, Mr. Finsbury; for I'm a friend.

*Fins.* Indubitably, Sir; but the misfortune is—he! he! ha!--Mr. Talbot Sir, has bespoke no dress.--Your servant gentlemen.

[*Exit Finsbury.*]

*Burs.* So your friend, Mr. Talbot, could not afford to bespeak a dress.—(*Bursal and Wheeler laugh insolently.*) How comes that, I wonder?

*Lord J.* If I'm not mistaken, here comes Talbot, to answer for himself.

*Rory.* But who, in the name of St. Patrick, has he along with him?

*Enter Talbot and Landlord.*

*Talb.* Come in along with us, farmer Hearty—Come in.

[*Whilst the farmer comes in, the boys, who were sitting on the stairs, rise and exclaim—*

Whom have we here? what now? come down lads, here's more fun.

*Rory.* What's here, Talbot?

*Talb.* An honest farmer, and a good-natured landlord, who would come here along with me to speak—

*Farm.* (*interrupting*) To speak the truth (*strikes his stick on the ground*).

*Landlord* (*unbuttoning his waistcoat*). But I am so

hot—so short-winded, that (*planting and puffing*) that for the soul and body of me, I cannot say what I have got for to say.

*Rory.* Faith now the more short-winded a story the better, to my fancy.

*Burs.* Wheeler, what's the matter, man? you look as if your under jaw was broke.

*Farm.* The matter is, young gentlemen, that there was once upon a time a fine bay hunter.

*Wheel.* (*squeezing up to Talbot aside*) Don't expose me, don't let him tell—(*to the farmer*) I'll pay for the corn I spoiled. (*to the landlord*) I'll pay for the horse.

*Farm.* I does not want to be paid for my corn—the short of it is, young gentlemen, this 'un here in the fine thing'-embobs (*pointing to Wheeler*) is a shabby fellow—he went and spoiled farmer Newington's best hunter.

*Land.* (*planting.*) Ruinationed him, ruinationed him.

*Rory.* But was that all the shabbiness? now I might, or any of us might have had such an accident as that—I suppose he paid the gentleman for the horse—or will do so in good time.

*Land.* (*holding his sides.*) O that I had but a little breath in this body o' mine to speak all—speak on farmer.

*Farm.* (*striking his stick on the floor.*) Oons, Sir, when a man's put out, he can't go on with his story.

*Omnes.* Be quiet, Rory—hush.

[*Rory puts his finger on his lips.*]

*Farm.* Why, Sir, I was a going to tell you the shabbiness—Why, Sir, he did not pay landlord here for the horse, but he goes and says to the landlord here—'Mr. Talbot had your horse on the self-same day, 'twas he did the damage, 'tis from he you must get your money'—So Mr. Talbot here, who is another guess sort of a gentleman (though he has not so fine a coat) would not see a man at a loss, that could not afford it, and not knowing which of 'em it was that spoiled the horse, goes, when he finds the other would not pay a farthing, and pays all.

*Rory* (*rubbing his hands*). There's Talbot for ye.—And now gentlemen (*to Wheeler and Bursal*) you guess the *reason*, as I do, I suppose, why he bespoke no dress—he had not money enough to be fine—and honest too—You are very fine, Mr. Wheeler, to do you justice.

*Lord J.* Pray, Mr. O’Ryan, let the farmer go on—he has more to say—How did you find out pray, my good friend, that it was not Talbot, who spoiled the horse!—Speak loud enough to be heard by every body.

*Farm.* Aye that I will—I say (*very loudly*) I say I saw him there (*pointing to Wheeler*) take the jump which strained the horse—and I’m ready to swear to it—Yet he let another pay—there’s the shabbiness.

[*A general groan from all the lads—Oh shabby Wheeler, shabby! I’ll not vote for shabby Wheeler.*]

*Lord J.* (*aside*) Alas, I must vote for him.

*Rory* (*sings.*)

‘True game to the last, no Wheeler for me,  
Talbot! O, Talbot’s the dog for me.’

(*Several voices join the chorus.*)

*Burs.* Wheeler, if you are not chosen captain, you must see and pay me for the dress.

*Wheel.* I’m as poor as a rat.

*Rory.* O yes! O yes! hear ye! hear ye all manner of men—The election is now going to begin forthwith in the big field, and Rory O’Ryan holds the poll for Talbot—Talbot for ever, huzza!

[*Exit Rory followed by the boys who exclaim—Talbot for ever, huzza—the landlord and farmer join them.*]

*Lord J.* Talbot, I’m glad you are, what I always thought you—I’m glad you did not write that odious song—I would not lose such a friend for all the songs in the world—Forgive me for my hastiness this morning—I’ve punished myself—I’ve promised to vote for Wheeler.

*Talb.* O, no matter whom you vote for, my lord, if you are still my friend, and if you know me to be your’s.

(*They shake hands.*)

*Lord J.* I must not say, ‘Huzza for Talbot.’

[*Exeunt.*]

## SCENE.

Windsor Terrace.

Lady Piercefield—Mrs. Talbot—Louisa—and a little girl of six years old, Lady Violetta, daughter to Lady Piercefield.

*Violetta* (*looking at a paper, which Louisa holds*). I like it *very* much.

*Lady P.* What is it that you like *very* much, Violetta?

*Violetta.* You are not to know *yet*, mamma—it is—I may tell her that—it is a little drawing, that Louisa is doing for me—Louisa, I wish you would let me shew it to mamma.

*Louisa.* And welcome, my dear, it is only a sketch of *The Little Merchants*, a story which Violetta was reading, and she asked me to try to draw the pictures of the little merchants for her.

(*Whilst Lady P. looks at the drawing, Violetta says to Louisa.*)

But are you in earnest, Louisa, about what you were saying to me just now? quite in earnest?

*Louisa.* Yes in earnest—quite in earnest, my dear.

*Violet.* And may I ask mamma *now*?

*Louisa.* If you please, my dear.

*Violet.* (*runs to her mother.*) Stoop down to me, mamma, I've something to whisper to you.

[*Lady Piercefield stoops down. Violetta throws her arms round her mother's neck.*]

*Violet.* (*aside to her mother.*) Mamma, do you know—you know you want a governess for me.

*Lady P.* Yes, if I could find a good one.

*Violet.* (*aloud*) Stoop again, mamma, I've more to whisper. (*aside to her mother*) She says she will be my governess, if you please.

*Lady P.* She!—who is she?

*Violet.* Louisa.

*Lady P.* (*patting Violetta's cheek.*) You are a little fool—Miss Talbot is only playing with you.

*Violet.* No indeed, mamma, she is in earnest, are not you, Louisa?—O, say yes.

*Louisa.* Yes.

*Violet.* (*claps her hands.*) Yes, mamma, you hear yes.

*Louisa.* If Lady Piercefield will trust you to my care—I am persuaded, that I should be much happier as your governess, my good little Violetta, than as an humble dependent of Miss Bursal's. (*aside to her mother*) You see, that, now I am put to the trial, I keep to my resolution, dear mother.

*Mrs. T.* Your Ladyship would not be surprised at this offer of my Louisa's, if you had heard, as we have done,



within these few hours, of the loss of the East India ship in which almost our whole property was embarked.

*Louisa.* The Bombay Castle is wrecked.

*Lady P.* The *Bombay Castle*! I have the pleasure to tell you, that you are misinformed—It was the *Airly Castle* that was wrecked.

*Louisa and Mrs. T.* Indeed!

*Lady P.* Yes—You may depend upon it—It was the *Airly Castle* that was lost—You know I am just come from Portsmouth, where I went to meet my brother, Governor Morton, who came home with the last India fleet, and from whom I had the intelligence.

(*Here Violetta interrupts, to ask her mother for her nose-gay—Lady P. gives it to her, and then goes on speaking.*)

*Lady P.* They were in such haste, foolish people! to carry their news to London, that they mistook one Castle for another—But, do you know, that Mr. Bursal loses fifty thousand pounds, it is said, by the *Airly Castle*.—When I told him she was lost, I thought he would have dropped down—however I found he comforted himself afterwards with a bottle of burgundy—but poor Miss Bursal has been in hysterics ever since.

*Mrs. T.* Poor girl!—My Louisa, you did not fall into hysterics, when I told you of the loss of our whole fortune.

(*Violetta during this dialogue has been seated on the ground making up a nose-gay.*)

*Violet.* (*aside*) Fall into hysterics! what are hysterics, I wonder.

*Louisa.* Miss Bursal is much to be pitied, for the loss of wealth will be the loss of happiness to her.

*Lady P.* It is to be hoped, that this loss may at least check the foolish pride and extravagance of young Bursal, who, as my son tells me—

(*A cry of 'Huzza!—Huzza,' behind the scenes.*)

*Enter Lord John.*

*Lord J.* (*hastily*) How d'ye do mother?—Miss Talbot, I give you joy—

*Lady P.* Take breath, take breath.

*Louisa.* Is my brother---

*Mrs. T.* Here he is!---Hark---Hark!

(*A cry behind the scenes of ' Talbot and truth for ever !  
Huzza !'*)

*Louisa.* They are chairing him.

*Lord J.* Yes, they are chairing him, and he has been chosen for his honourable conduct, not for his electioneering skill, for, to do him justice, Coriolanus himself was not a worse electioneerer.

*Enter Rory O'Ryan and another Eton lad carrying Talbot in a chair, followed by a crowd of Eton lads.*

*Rory.* By your *lave*, my lord---By your *lave*, ladies.

*Omnes.* (*Huzza ! Talbot and truth for ever, Huzza !*)

*Talb.* Set me down ! there's my mother!---there's my sister !

*Rory.* Easy, easy—Set him down!--No such *ting* ! give him t'other huzza ! there's nothing like a good loud huzza in this world—Yes faith there is, for as my lord John said just now, out of some book or his own head--

'One self-approving hour whole years out-weighs,  
Of stupid starers and of loud huzzas.'

(*Curtain falls.*)

# THE MIMIC.



## CHAPTER I.

**MR.** and Mrs. Montague spent the summer of the year 1795 at Clifton, with their son Frederick, and their two daughters, Sophia and Marianne.—They had taken much care of the education of their children, nor were they ever tempted, by any motive of personal convenience or temporary amusement, to hazard the permanent happiness of their pupils.

Sensible of the extreme importance of early impressions, and of the powerful influence of external circumstances in forming the character and the manners, they were now anxious, that the variety of new ideas, and new objects, which would strike the minds of their children, should appear in a just point of view.

‘Let children see, and judge for themselves,’ is often inconsiderately said.—Where children see only a part, they cannot judge of the whole—and from the superficial

view which they can have in short visits, and desultory conversation, they can form only a false estimate of the objects of human happiness, a false notion of the nature of society, and false opinions of characters.—For these reasons Mr. and Mrs. Montague were particularly cautious in the choice of their acquaintance, as they were well aware, that whatever passed in conversation before their children became part of their education.—When they came to Clifton, they wished to have had a house entirely to themselves; but as they came late in the season, almost all the lodging houses were full, and for a few weeks they were obliged to remain in a house, in which some of the apartments were already occupied.

During the first fortnight, they scarcely saw or heard any thing of one of the families, who lodged on the same floor with them.—An elderly Quaker, and his sister Birtha were their silent neighbours.—The blooming complexion of the lady had indeed attracted the attention of the children, as they caught a glimpse of her face, when she was getting into her carriage, to go out upon the Downs.—They could scarcely believe, that she came to the Wells on account of her health.—Besides, her blooming complexion, the delicate white of her garments had struck them with admiration, and they observed, that her brother carefully guarded these from the wheel of the carriage, as he handed her in. From this circumstance, and from the benevolent countenance of the old gentleman, they concluded, that he was very fond of his sister—that they were certainly very happy, only they never spoke, and could be seen but for a moment.

Not so the maiden lady, who occupied the ground floor.—On the stairs, in the passages, at her window, she was continually visible, and she seemed to possess the art of being present in all these places at once—Her voice was eternally to be heard, and it was not particularly melodious. The very first day she met Mrs. Montague's children on the stairs, she stopped to tell Marianne, that she was a charming dear! and a charming little dear! to kiss her, to inquire her name, and to inform her, that her own name was 'Mrs. Theresa Tattle;' a circumstance of which there was little danger of their long remaining in ignorance; for in the course of one morning, at least twenty single, and as many double raps at the door, were

succeeded by vociferations of 'Mrs. Theresa Tattle's servant!'—'Mrs. Theresa Tattle at home?'—'Mrs. Theresa Tattle not at home.'

No person at the Wells was oftener at home and abroad than Mrs. Tattle! She had, as she deemed it, the happiness, to have a most extensive acquaintance residing at Clifton. She had for years kept a register of arrivals. She regularly consulted the subscriptions to the circulating libraries, and the lists at the Ball and the Pump-Rooms; so that, with a memory unincumbered with literature, and free from all domestic cares, she contrived to retain a most astonishing and correct list of births, deaths, and marriages; together with all the anecdotes, amusing, instructive, or scandalous, which are necessary to the conversation of a water-drinking place, and essential to the character of a 'very pleasant woman.'

'A very pleasant woman,' Mrs. Tattle was usually called, and conscious of her accomplishments, she was eager to introduce herself to the acquaintance of her new neighbours; having, with her ordinary expedition, collected from their servants, by means of her own, all that could be known, or rather all that could be told, about them. The name of Montague, at all events, she knew was a good name, and justified her courting this acquaintance. She courted at first by nods and becks and smiles, at Marianne, whenever she met her; and Marianne, who was a very little girl, began presently to nod and smile in return; persuaded, that a lady, who smiled so much, could not be ill-natured. Besides, Mrs. Theresa's parlour door was sometimes left more than half open, to afford a view of a green parrot. Marianne sometimes passed very slowly by this door. One morning it was left quite wide open, she stopped to say 'Pretty Poll,' and immediately Mrs. Tattle begged she would do her the honour to walk in and see 'Pretty Poll;' at the same time taking the liberty to offer her a piece of iced plumb-cake.

The next day Mrs. Theresa Tattle did herself the honour to wait upon Mrs. Montague, 'to apologize for the liberty she had taken, in inviting Mrs. Montague's charming Miss Marianne into her apartment to see Pretty Poll; and for the still greater liberty she had taken in offering her a piece of plumb-cake, inconside-

rate creature that she was! which might possibly have disagreed with her, and which certainly were liberties she never should have been induced to take, if she had not been unaccountably bewitched by Miss Marianne's striking, though highly flattering resemblance, to a young gentleman, an officer, with whom she had danced; she was sorry to say, now nearly twelve years ago, at the races in ——shire, of the name of Montague, a most respectable young man, and of a most respectable family, with which, in a remote degree, she might presume to say, she herself was some way connected, having the honour to be nearly related to the Jones's of Merionethshire, who were cousins to the Manwairings of Bedfordshire, who married into the family of the Griffith's, the eldest branch of which she understood had the honour to be couſin-erman to Mr. Montague, on which account she had been impatient to pay a visit so likely to be productive of most agreeable consequences, in the acquisition of an acquaintance, whose society must do her infinite honour.'

Having thus happily accomplished her first visit, there seemed little probability of escaping Mrs. Tattle's farther acquaintance. In the course of the first week, she only hinted to Mr. Montague, that 'some people thought his system of education rather odd; that she should be obliged to him, if he would, sometime or other, when he had nothing else to do, just sit down and make her understand his notions, that she might have something to say to her acquaintance, as she always wished to have when she heard any friend attacked, or any friend's opinions.'

Mr. Montague declining to sit down and make this lady understand a system of education, only to give her something to say, and shewing unaccountable indifference about the attacks, with which he was threatened, Mrs. Tattle next addressed herself to Mrs. Montague; prophesying, in a most serious whisper, 'that the charming Miss Marianne would shortly and inevitably grow quite crooked, if she were not immediately provided with a back-board, a French dancing-master, and a pair of stocks.' This alarming whisper could not, however, have a permanent effect upon Mrs. Montague's understanding, because, three days afterwards, Mrs. Theresa, upon the most anxious inspection, mistook the hip and

shoulder, which should have been the highest. This danger vanishing, Mrs. Tattle presently, with a rueful length of face and formal preface, 'hesitated to assure Mrs. Montague, that she was greatly distressed about her daughter Sophy; that she was convinced her lungs were affected; and that she certainly ought to drink the waters, morning and evening; and above all things must keep one of the patirosa lozenges constantly in her mouth, and directly consult Dr. Cardamum, the best physician in the world, and the person, she would send for herself upon her death bed; because, to her certain knowlege, he had recovered a young lady, a relation of her own, after she had lost one whole *globe* of her lungs.'

The medical opinion of a lady of so much anatomical precision could not have much weight; nor was this universal adviser more successful in an attempt to introduce a tutor to Frederick, who, she apprehended, must want one to perfect him in the Latin and Greek and dead languages, of which she observed it would be impertinent for a woman to talk, only she might venture to repeat what she had heard said by good authority, that a competency of the dead tongues could be had no where but at a public school, or else from a private tutor, who had been abroad (after the advantage of a classical education, finished in one of the Universities) with a good family, without which introduction, it was idle to think of reaping solid advantages from any continental tour; all which requisites she could, from personal knowledge, aver concentrated in the gentleman, she had the honour to recommend, as having been tutor to a young nobleman, who had now no farther occasion for him, being unfortunately, for himself and his family, killed in an untimely duel.

All her suggestions being lost upon these unthinking parents, Mrs. Theresa Tattle's powers were next tried upon the children, and presently her success was apparent. On Sophy, indeed, she could not make any impression, though she had expended on her some of her finest strokes of flattery. Sophy, though very desirous of the approbation of her friends, was not very desirous to win the favour of strangers. She was about thirteen; that dangerous age at which ill-educated girls, in their anxiety to display their accomplishments, are apt to be-

come dependent for applause upon the praise of every idle visitor ; when the habits not being formed, and the attention being suddenly turned to dress and manners, girls are apt to affect and imitate, indiscriminately, every thing that they fancy to be agreeable.

Sophy, whose taste had been cultivated at the same time with her powers of reasoning, was not liable to fall into these errors ; she found, that she could please those whom she wished to please, without affecting to be any thing but what she really was ; and her friends listened to what she said, though she never repeated the sentiments, or adopted the phrases, which she might easily have caught from the conversation of those, who were older, or more fashionable than herself. This word *fashionable* Mrs. Theresa Tattle knew had usually a great effect even at thirteen, but she had not observed, that it had much power upon Sophy ; nor were her documents concerning grace and manners much attended to. Her mother had taught Sophy, that it was best to let herself alone, and not to distort either her person or her mind, in acquiring grimace, which nothing but the fashion of the moment can support, and which is always detected and despised by people of real good sense and politeness.

‘ Bless me ! ’ said Mrs. Tattle to herself, ‘ if I had such a tall daughter, and so unformed, before my eyes from morning to night, it would certainly break my poor heart. Thank God I am not a mother ! Miss Marianne for me, if I was ! ’

Miss Marianne had heard so often from Mrs. Tattle, that she was charming, that she could not help believing it ; and from being a very pleasing, unaffected little girl, she in a short time grew so conceited, that she could neither speak, look, move, nor be silent, without imagining that every body was, or ought to be, looking at her ; and when Mrs. Theresa saw that Mrs. Montague looked very grave upon these occasions, she, to repair the ill she had done, would say, after praising Marianne’s hair or her eyes, ‘ O, but little ladies should never think about their beauty, you know ; nobody loves any body, you know, for being handsome, but for being good. ’ People must think children are very silly, or else they can never have reflected upon the nature of belief in their



own minds, if they imagine, that children will believe the words that are said to them by way of moral, when the countenance, manner, and every concomitant circumstance tell them a different tale. Children are excellent physiognomists, they quickly learn the universal language of looks, and what is said of them always makes a greater impression, than what is said to them; a truth of which those prudent people surely cannot be aware, who comfort themselves, and apologize to parents, by saying, 'O but I would not say so and so to the child.'

Mrs. Theresa had seldom said to Frederick Montague, 'that he had a vast deal of drollery, and was a most incomparable Mimic!' but she had said so of him in whispers, which magnified the sound to his imagination, if not to his ear. He was a boy of much vivacity, and had considerable abilities; but his appetite for vulgar praise had not yet been surfeited; even Mrs. Theresa Tattle's flattery pleased him, and he exerted himself for her entertainment so much, that he became quite a buffoon. Instead of observing characters and manners, that he might judge of them and form his own, he now watched every person he saw, that he might detect some foible, or catch some singularity in their gesture or pronunciation, which he might successfully mimic.

Alarmed by the rapid progress of these evils, Mr. and Mrs. Montague, who, from the first day that they had been honoured with Mrs. Tattle's visit, had begun to look out for new lodgings, were now extremely impatient to decamp. They were not people, who, from the weak fear of offending a silly acquaintance, would hazard the happiness of their family. They had heard of a house in the country, which was likely to suit them, and they determined to go directly to look at it. As they were to be absent all day, they foresaw their officious neighbour would probably interfere with their children. They did not choose to exact any promise from them, which they might be tempted to break, and therefore they only said at parting, 'If Mrs. Theresa Tattle should ask you to come to her, do as you think proper.'

Scarcely had Mrs. Montague's carriage gone out of hearing, when a note was brought, directed to 'Frede-

rick Montague, Esq. junior,' which he immediately opened, and read as follows :

' Mrs. Theresa Tattle presents her very best compliments to the entertaining Mr. Frederick Montague ; she hopes he will have the charity to drink tea with her this evening, and bring his charming sister Marianne with him, as Mrs. Theresa will be quite alone, with a shocking headach, and is sensible her nerves are affected ; and Dr. Cardamum says, that (especially in Mrs. T. T.'s case) it is downright death to nervous patients to be alone an instant ; she therefore trusts Mr. Frederick will not refuse to come and make her laugh.

' Mrs. Theresa has taken care to provide a few macarons for her little favourite, who said she was particularly fond of them the other day.

' Mrs. Theresa hopes they will all come at six, or before, not forgetting Miss Sophy, if she will condescend to be of the party.'

At the first reading of this note, ' the entertaining' Mr. Frederick, and the charming Miss Marianne, laughed heartily, and looked at Sophy as if they were afraid, that she should think it possible, they could like such gross flattery ; but, upon a second perusal, Marianne observed, that it certainly was good-natured of Mrs. Theresa to remember the macarons ; and Frederick allowed, that it was wrong to laugh at the poor woman because she had the headach. Then, twisting the note in his fingers, he appealed to Sophy ; ' Well, Sophy, leave off drawing for an instant, and tell us, what answer can we send ?' ' Can ! we can send what answer we please.' ' Yes, I know that,' said Frederick ; ' I would refuse if I could, but we ought not to do any thing rude, should we ? So I think we might as well go. Hey ! because we could not refuse, if we would, I say.'

' You have made such confusion,' replied Sophy, ' between ' could n't,' and ' would n't,' and ' should n't,' that I can't understand you ; surely they are all different things.'

' Different ; no,' cried Frederick, ' could, would, should, might, and ought, are all the same thing in the Latin grammar ; all of 'em signs of the potential mood, you know.'

Sophy, whose powers of reasoning were not to be con-

ounded even by quotations from the Latin grammar, looked up soberly from her drawing, and answered, 'That very likely those words might be signs of the same thing in the Latin grammar, but that she believed they meant perfectly different things in real life.'

'That's just as people please,' said her sophistical brother, 'you know words mean nothing in themselves. If I chose to call my hat my *cadwallader*, you would understand me just as well, after I had once explained it to you, that by *cadwallader* I meant this black thing, that I put upon my head; *cadwallader* and hat would then be just the same thing to you.'

'Then why have two words for the same thing?' said Sophy; 'and what has this to do with *could* and *should*? You wanted to prove—'

'I wanted to prove,' interrupted Frederick, 'that it's not worth while to dispute for two hours about two words. Do keep to the point, Sophy, and don't dispute with me.'

'I was not disputing, I was reasoning.'

'Well, reasoning or disputing. Women have no business to do either, for how should they know how to chop logic like men.'

At this contemptuous sarcasm upon her sex, Sophy's colour rose. 'There!' cried Frederick, exulting, 'Now we shall see a philosopheress in a passion. I'd give sixpence, half-price for a harlequin entertainment, to see Sophy in a passion. Now, Marianne, look at her brush dabbling so fast in the water!'

Sophy, who could not easily bear to be laughed at, with some little indignation said, 'Brother, I wish,——' 'There! There!' cried Frederick, pointing to the colour, which rose in her cheek almost to her temples; 'Rising! Rising! Rising! Look at the thermometer. Blood heat! Blood! Fever heat! Boiling water heat! Marianne.'

'Then,' said Sophy, smiling, 'you should stand a little farther off, both of you; leave the thermometer to itself a little while; give it time to cool. It will come down to temperate by the time you look again.'

'O, brother,' cried Marianne, 'she's so good-humour'd, don't teaze her any more; and don't draw heads upon her paper; and don't stretch her rubber out; and don't

let us dirty any more of her brushes : See ! the sides of her tumbler are all manner of colours.'

'O, I only mixed red, blue, green, and yellow, to shew you, Marianne, that all colours mixed together make white. But she is temperate now, and I won't plague her ; she shall chop logic if she likes it, though she is a woman.'

'But that's not fair, brother,' said Marianne, 'to say woman in that way. I'm sure Sophy found out how to tie that difficult knot, which papa shewed to us yesterday, long before you did, though you are a man.' 'Not long,' said Frederick ; 'besides, that was only a conjuring trick.'

'It was very ingenious, though,' said Marianne, 'and papa said so ; and besides, she understood the rule of three, which was no conjuring trick, better than you did, though she is a woman ; and she may reason too, mamma says.'

'Very well, let her reason away,' said the provoking wit ; 'all I have to say is, she'll never be able to make a pudding.' 'Why not, pray brother,' inquired Sophy, looking up again very gravely. 'Why, you know papa himself, the other day at dinner, said, that that woman, who talks Greek and Latin as well as I do, is a fool after all ; and that she had better have learned something useful ; and Mrs. Tattle said, she'd answer for it she did not know how to make a pudding.'

'Well, but I am not talking Greek and Latin, am I ?'

'No, but you are drawing, and that's the same thing.'

'The same thing ! O Frederick,' said little Marianne, laughing.

'You may laugh, but I say it is the same sort of thing. Women, that are always drawing and reasoning, never know how to make puddings ; Mrs. Theresa Tattle said so, when I shewed her Sophy's beautiful drawing yesterday.'

'Mrs. Theresa Tattle might say so,' replied Sophy, calmly, 'but I do not perceive the reason, brother, why drawing should prevent me from learning how to make a pudding.'

'Well, I say you'll never learn to make a good pudding.'

'I have learned,' continued Sophy, who was mixing her colours, 'to mix such and such colours together to

nake the colour that I want ; and why should I not be able to learn to mix flour and butter, and sugar and egg together, to make the taste that I want ?

‘ O, but mixing will never do, unless you know the quantities, like a cook ; and you would never learn the right quantities.’

‘ How did the cook learn them ? cannot I learn them as she did ?’

‘ Yes, but you’d never do it exactly, and mind the spoonfuls right, by the receipt, like a cook, exactly.’

‘ Indeed ! indeed but she would,’ cried Marianne eagerly, ‘ and a great deal more exactly, for Mamma has taught her to weigh and measure things very carefully ; and when I was ill, she always weighed my bark so nicely, and dropped my drops so carefully ; not like the cook.’

When Mamma took me down to see her make a cake once, I saw her spoonfuls, and her ounces, and her hand-fuls ; she dashed and splashed without minding exactness, or the receipt, or any thing. I’m sure Sophy would make a much better pudding, if exactness only is wanting.’

‘ Well, granting that she could make the best pudding in the whole world, what does that signify ? I say she never would, so it comes to the same thing.’

‘ Never would ! how can you tell that, brother ?’

‘ Why now look at her, with her books, and her drawings, and all this apparatus ; do you think she would ever jump up, with all her nicety too, and put by all these things, to go down into the greasy kitchen, and plump up to the elbows in suet, like a cook, for a plumb-pudding ?’

‘ I need not plump up to the elbows brother,’ said Sophy, smiling ; ‘ nor is it necessary, that I should be a cook ; but if it were necessary, I hope I should be able to make a pudding.’

‘ Yes, yes, yes,’ cried Marianne, warmly, ‘ that she would jump up, and put by all her things in a minute, if it was necessary, and run down stairs and up again like lightning, or do any thing that was ever so disagreeable to her, even about the suet, with all her nicety brother, I assure you, as she used to do any thing, every thing for me, when I was ill last winter. O, brother, she can do any thing ; and she could make the best plumb-pudding in the whole world, I’m sure, in a minute, if it was necessary.’

# THE MIMIC.

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## CHAPTER II.

A KNOCK at the door from Mrs. Theresa Tattle's servant recalled Marianne to the business of the day.

'There,' said Frederick 'we have sent no answer all this time. It's necessary to think of that in a minute.'

The servant came with his mistress's compliments, to let the young ladies and Mr. Frederick know, that she was waiting tea for them.

'Waiting! then we must go,' said Frederick.

The servant opened the door wider, to let him pass, and Marianne thought she must follow her brother, so they went down stairs together, whilst Sophy gave her own message to the servant, and quietly staid at her usual occupations.

Mrs. Tattle was seated at her tea-table, with a large plate of macaroons beside her, when Frederick and Marianne entered. She was 'delighted' they were come, and 'grieved' not to see Miss Sophy along with them. Marianne coloured a little, for, though she had precipitately followed her brother, and though he had quieted her conscience for a moment, by saying 'You know papa and mamma told us to do what we thought best,' yet she did not feel quite pleased with herself; and it was not till after Mrs. Theresa had exhausted all her compliments, and half her macaroons, that she could restore her spirits to their usual height.

'Come, Mr. Frederick,' said she, after tea, 'you promised to make me laugh; and nobody can make me laugh so well as yourself.'

'O, brother,' said Marianne, 'shew Mrs. Theresa Dr. Carbuncle eating his dinner, and I will be Mrs. Carbuncle.'

*Marianne.* Now, my dear, what shall I help you to?

*Frederick.* My dear! she never calls him my dear, you know, but always Doctor.

*Mar.* Well then, Doctor, what will you eat to-day?

*Fred.* Eat, madam! Eat! Nothing! Nothing! I don't see any thing here that I can eat, ma'am.

*Mar.* Here's eels, Sir; let me help you to some eel, stewed eel, Sir, you used to be fond of stewed eel.

*Fred.* Used, ma'am, used! But I'm sick of stewed eels. You would tire one of any thing. Am I to see nothing but eels? And what's this at the bottom?

*Mar.* Mutton, doctor, roast mutton, if you'll be so good as to cut it.

*Fred.* Cut it, ma'am I can't cut it, I say. It's as hard as a deal board. You might as well tell me to cut the table, ma'am. Mutton, indeed! not a bit of fat. Roast mutton, indeed! not a drop of gravy. Mutton, truly! quite a cinder. I'll have none of it.—Here, take it away; take it down stairs to the cook. It's a very hard case, Mrs. Carbuncle, that I can never have a bit of any thing, that I can eat at my own table, Mrs. Carbuncle, since I was married, ma'am; I, that am the easiest man in the whole world to please about my dinner. It's really very extraordinary, Mrs. Carbuncle! What have you at that corner there, under the cover?

*Mar.* Patties, Sir: oyster patties.

*Fred.* Patties, ma'am! kickshaws! I hate kickshaws. Not worth putting under a cover, ma'am. And why have not you glass covers, that one may see one's dinner before one, before it grows cold with asking questions, Mrs. Carbuncle, and lifting up covers? But nobody has any sense, and I see no water-plates any where lately.

*Mar.* Do, pray, doctor, let me help you to a bit of this chicken before it gets cold, my dear.

*Fred.* (*aside.*) 'My dear' again, Marianne!

*Mar.* Yes, brother, because she is frightened you know, and Mrs. Carbuncle always says 'my dear' to him when she's frightened, and looks so pale from side to side, and sometimes she cries before dinner's done; and then all the company are quite silent, and don't know what to do.

'O, such a little creature! to have so much sense too!' exclaimed Mrs. Theresa with rapture. 'Mr. Frederick, you'll make me die with laughing!—Pray go on, Doctor Carbuncle.'

*Fred.* Well, ma'am, then if I must eat something, send me a bit of fowl; a leg and wing, the liver-wing, and a bit of the breast, oyster sauce, and a slice of that ham, if you please ma'am

[*Dr. Carbuncle eats voraciously, with his head down to his plate, and dropping the sauce, he buttons up his coat tight across the breast.*]

*Fred.* Here—A plate, knife and fork, bit o' bread, a glass of Dorchester ale!

'O, admirable!' exclaimed Mrs. Tattle, clapping her hands.

'Now, brother, suppose that it is after dinner,' said Marianne, 'and shew us how the doctor goes to sleep.'

Frederick threw himself back in an arm chair, leaning his head back, with his mouth open, snoring; nodded from time to time, crossed and uncrossed his legs, tried to waken himself by twitching his wig, settling his collar, blowing his nose, and rapping on the lid of his snuff-box.

All which infinitely diverted Mrs. Tattle, who, when she could stop herself from laughing, 'declared it made her sigh too, to think of the life poor Mrs. Carbuncle led with that man, and all for nothing, too, for her jointure was nothing, next to nothing, though a great thing to be sure her friends thought for her, when she was only Sally Ridgway, before she was married. Such a wife as she makes, continued Mrs. Theresa, lifting up her hands and eyes to heaven, and so much as she has gone through, the brute ought to be ashamed of himself, if he does not leave her something extraordinary in his will; for turn it which way she will, she can never keep a carriage, or live like any body else on her jointure, after all, she tells me, poor soul! A sad prospect after her husband's death to look forward to, instead of being comfortable, as her friends expected; and she, poor young thing, knowing no better, when they married her. People should look into these things beforehand, or never marry at all, I say, Miss Marianne.'

Miss Marianne, who did not clearly comprehend this affair of the jointure, or the reason why Mrs. Carbuncle would be so unhappy after her husband's death, turned to Frederick, who was at that instant studying Mrs. Theresa as a future character to mimic, 'Brother,' said Marianne, 'now sing an Italian song for us like Miss Croker. Pray, Miss Croker, favour us with a song. Mrs. Theresa Tattle has never had the pleasure of hearing you sing; she's quite impatient to hear you sing.'



'Yes, indeed I am,' said Mrs. Theresa.

Frederick put his hands before him affectedly; 'O, indeed, ma'am! indeed, ladies! I really am so hoarse, it distresses me so to be pressed to sing; besides, upon my word, I have quite left off singing. I've never sung once, except for very particular people, this winter.'

*Mar.* But Mrs. Theresa Tattle is a very particular person. I'm sure you'll sing for her.

*Fred.* Certainly, ma'am, I allow you use a powerful argument; but I assure you now, I would do my best to oblige you, but I absolutely have forgotten all my English songs. Nobody hears any thing but Italian now, and I have been so giddy, as to leave my Italian music behind me. Besides, I make it a rule never to hazard myself without an accompaniment.

*Mar.* Oh, try, Miss Croker, for once.

[*Frederick sings, after much preluding.*]

Violante in the pantry,  
Gnawing of a mutton bone:  
How she gnawed it,  
How she clawed it,  
When she found herself alone.

'Charming!' exclaimed Mrs. Tattle; 'so like Miss Croker, I'm sure I shall think of you Mr. Frederick, when I hear her asked to sing again. Her voice, however, introduces her to very pleasant parties, and she's a girl that's very much taken notice of, and I don't doubt will go off vastly well. She's a particular favourite of mine, you must know; and I mean to do her a piece of service the first opportunity, by saying something or other, that shall go round to her relations in Northumberland, and make them do something for her; as well they may, for they are all rolling in gold, and won't give her a penny.'

*Mar.* Now, brother, read the newspaper like Counsellor Puff.

'O, pray do, Mr. Frederick, for I declare I admire you of all things! you are quite yourself to-night. Here's a newspaper, Sir. Pray let us have Counsellor Puff. It's not late.

[*Frederick reads in a pompous voice.*]

'As a delicate white hand has ever been deemed a

distinguishing ornament in either sex, Messrs. Valiant and Wise conceive it to be their duty, to take the earliest opportunity to advertise the nobility and gentry of Great Britain in general, and their friends in particular, that they have now ready for sale, as usual, at the Hippocrates's Head, a fresh assortment of new-invented, much-admired primrose soap.—To prevent impositions and counterfeits, the public are requested to take notice, that the only genuine primrose soap is stamped on the outside, 'Valiant and Wise.'

'O you most incomparable mimic! 'tis absolutely the Counsellor himself. I absolutely must shew you, some day, to my friend Lady Battersby; you'd absolutely make her die with laughing; and she'd quite adore you,' said Mrs. Theresa, who was well aware that every pause must be filled with flattery. 'Pray go on, pray go on, I shall never be tired, if I were to sit looking at you these hundred years.'

Stimulated by these plaudits, Frederick proceeded to shew how Colonel Epaulette blew his nose, flourished his cambric handkerchief, bowed to lady Di Periwinkle; and admired her work, saying, 'Done by no hands, as you may guess, but those of Fairly Fair.'—Whilst Lady Di, he observed, simpered so prettily, and took herself so quietly for Fairly Fair, not perceiving, that the Colonel was admiring his own nails all the while.

Next to Colonel Epaulette, Frederick, at Marianne's particular desire, came into the room like Sir Charles Slang.

'Very well, brother,' cried she, 'your hand down to the very bottom of your pocket, and your other shoulder up to your ear; but you are not quite wooden enough, and you should walk as if your hip was out of joint.—There now, Mrs. Tattle, are not those good eyes; they stare so like his without seeming to see any thing all the while.'

'Excellent! admirable! Mr. Frederick, I must say, you are the best mimic of your age I ever saw, and I'm sure Lady Battersby will think so too. That is Sir Charles to the very life. But with all that, you must know he's a mighty pleasant, fashionable young man, when you come to know him, and has a great deal of

sense under all that, and is of a very good family, the Slangs, you know. Sir Charles will come into a fine fortune himself next year, if he can keep clear of gambling, which I hear is his foible, poor young man. Pray go on, I interrupt you, Mr. Frederick.'

'Now, brother,' said Marianne.

'No, Marianne, I can do no more, I'm quite tired, and I will do no more,' said Frederick, stretching himself at full length upon a sofa.

Even in the midst of laughter, and whilst the voice of flattery yet sounded in his ear, Frederick felt sad, displeased with himself, and disgusted with Mrs. Theresa.

'What a deep sigh was there!'—said Mrs. Theresa, 'what can make you sigh so bitterly? you, who make every body else laugh. O, such another sigh again!'

'Marianne,' cried Frederick, 'do you remember the man in the mask.'

'What man in the mask, brother?'

'The man—the actor—the buffoon that my father told us of, who used to cry behind the mask, that made every body else laugh.'

'Cry! Bless me,' said Mrs. Theresa, 'mighty odd! very extraordinary! but one can't be surprised at meeting with extraordinary characters amongst that race of people. Actors, by profession, you know, who are brought up from the egg to make their fortune, or at least their bread, by their oddities. But, my dear Mr. Frederick, you are quite pale, quite exhausted,—no wonder—what will you have, a glass of cowslip wine!'

'O, no, thank you ma'am,' said Frederick.

O, yes; indeed you must not leave me without taking something; and Miss Marianne must have another macaroon; I insist upon it,' said Mrs. Theresa, ringing the bell. 'It is not late, and my man Christopher will bring up the cowslip wine in a minute.'

'But Sophy! and papa and mamma you know will come home home just now,' said Marianne.

'O, Miss Sophy has her books and drawings; you know, she's never afraid of being alone; besides, to-night it was her own choice; and as to your papa and mamma, they won't be home to-night, I'm pretty sure, for a gentleman, who had it from their own authority,

told me where they were going, which is father off than they think, but they did not consult me; and I fancy they'll be obliged to sleep out, so you need not be in a hurry about them. We'll have candles.'

The door opened just as Mrs. Tattle was going to ring the bell again for candles, and the cowslip wine. 'Christopher! Christopher!' said Mrs. Theresa, who was standing at the fire, with her back to the door, when it opened, 'Christopher! pray bring—do you hear? But no Christopher answered! and, upon turning round, Mrs. Tattle, instead of Christopher, beheld two little black figures, which stood perfectly still and silent. It was so dark, that their forms could scarcely be discerned.

'In the name of Heaven, who and what may you be? Speak, I conjure you! What are ye?'

'The chimney-sweepers, ma'am, and please your ladyship.'

'Chimney-sweepers, repeated Frederick and Marianne, bursting out a laughing.

'Chimney sweepers!' repeated Mrs. Theresa, provoked at the recollection of her late solemn address to them.—'Chimney-sweepers! and could not you say so a little sooner? and pray what brings you here, gentleman, at this time of night?'

'The bell rang ma'am,' answered the squeaking voice.

'The bell rang! yes, for Christopher. The boy's mad or drunk.'

'Ma'am,' said the tallest of the chimney-sweepers, who had not yet spoken, and who now began in a very blunt manner; 'Ma'am, your brother desired us to come up when the bell rang; so we did.'

'My brother, I have no brother dunce,' said Mrs. Theresa.

'Mr. Eden, madam.'

'O, ho!' said Mrs. Tattle, in a more complacent tone, 'the boy takes me for Miss BIRTHA EDEN, I perceive;' and, flattered to be taken in the dark, by a chimney-sweeper, for a young and handsome lady, Mrs. Theresa laughed and informed him, 'that they had mistaken the room; that they must go up another pair of stairs, and turn to the left.'

The chimney-sweeper with the squeaking voice bow-

ed, thanked her ladyship for this information, said, 'Good night to ye, quality;' and they both moved towards the door.

'Stay,' said Mrs. Tattle, whose curiosity was excited, 'What can the Edens want with chimney-sweepers at this time o' night, I wonder? Christopher, did you hear any thing about it?' said the lady to her footman, who was now lighting the candles.

'Upon my word, ma'am,' said the servant, 'I can't say, but I'll step down below and inquire. I heard them talking about it in the kitchen, but I only got a word here and there, for I was hunting for the snuff-dish, as I knew it must be for candles, when I heard the bell ring, ma'am, so I thought to find the snuff-dish, before I answered the bell, for I knew it must be for candles you rang. But if you please, I'll step down now, ma'am, and see about the chimney-sweeps.'

'Yes, step down do, and, Christopher, bring up the cowslip wine, and some more macaroons for my little Marianne.

Marianne withdrew rather coldly from a kiss, which Mrs. Tattle was going to give her, for she was somewhat surprised at the familiarity, with which this lady talked to her footman. She had not been used to these manners in her father and mother, and she did not like them.

'Well,' said Mrs. Tattle to Christopher, who was now returned, 'what is the news.'

'Ma'am, the little fellow with the squeaking voice has been telling me the whole story. The other morning, ma'am, early, he and the other were down the hill, sweeping in Paradise-row; those chimnies, they say, are difficult; and the square fellow, ma'am, the biggest of the two boys, got wedged in the chimney; the other little fellow was up at the top at the time, and heard the cry, but in his fright, and all, he did not know what to do, ma'am, for he looked about from the top of the chimney, and not a soul could he see stirring, but a few that he could not make mind his screech; the boy within almost stifling too. So he screeched, and screeched, all he could; and by the greatest chance in life, ma'am, old Mr. Eden was just going down the hill to fetch his morning walk.'

‘Aye,’ interrupted Mrs. Theresa, ‘friend Ephraim is one of your early risers.’

‘Well,’ said Marianne, impatiently.

‘So, ma’am, hearing the screech, he turns and sees the sweep, and the moment he understands the matter——’

‘I’m sure he must have taken some time to understand it,’ interposed Mrs. Tattle, ‘for he’s the slowest creature breathing, and the deafest in company. Go on, Christopher. So the sweep did make him hear?’

‘So he says, ma’am; and so the old gentleman went in, and pulled the boy out of the chimney, with much ado, ma’am.’

‘Bless me!’ exclaimed Mrs. Theresa, ‘but did old Eden go up the chimney himself after the boy, wig and all?’

‘Why, ma’am,’ said Christopher, with a look of great delight, ‘that was all as one, as the very ’dential words I put to the boy myself, when he telled me his story. But, ma’am, that was what I could not get out of him neither, rightly, for he is a churl; the big boy, that was stuck in the chimney, I mean; for when I put the question to him about the wig, laughing like, he would n’t take it laughing like at all, but would only make answer to us like a bear, ‘He saved my life, that’s all I know;’—and this over again, ma’am, to all the kitchen round, that cross-questioned him. So, when I finds him so stupid and ill-mannered like (for I offered him a shilling, ma’am, myself, to tell about the wig) but he put it back in a ways, that did not become such as he, to no lady’ butler, ma’am; whereupon I turns to the slim fellow, and he’s smarterer, and more mannerly, ma’am, with a tongue in his head for his betters, but he could not resolve me my question neither, for he was up at the top of the chimney the best part o’ the time; and when he came down, Mr. Eden had his wig on, but had his arm all bare and bloody, ma’am.’

‘Poor Mr. Eden,’ exclaimed Marianne.

‘O, Miss,’ continued the servant, ‘and the chimney-sweep himself was so bruised, and must have been killed.’

‘Well, well! but he’s alive now; go on with your story, Christopher,’ said Mrs. T. ‘Chimney-sweepers get wedged in chimnies every day, it’s part of their

trade, and it's a happy thing, when they come off with a few bruises. To be sure,' added she, observing that both Frederick and Marianne looked displeas'd at this speech, 'to be sure, if one may believe this story, there was some real danger.'

'Real danger! yes, indeed,' said Marianne, 'and I'm sure I think Mr. Eden was very good.'

'Certainly, it was a most commendable action, and quite providential; so I shall take an opportunity of saying, when I tell the story in all companies; and the boy may thank his kind stars, I'm sure, to the end of his days, for such an escape.—But, pray, Christopher,' said she, persisting in her conversation with Christopher, who was now laying the cloth for supper,—'Pray which house was it in Paradise-row? where the Eagles or the Miss Ropers lodge? or which?'

'It was at my Lady Battersby's ma'am.'

'Ha! ha!' cried Mrs. Theresa, 'I thought we should get to the bottom of the affair at last. This is excellent! This will make an admirable story for my lady Battersby the next time I see her. These Quakers are so sly!—Old Eden, I know, has long wanted to get himself introduced in that house, and a charming charitable expedient he hit upon! My Lady Battersby will enjoy this of all things.'

# THE MIMIC.



## CHAPTER III.

‘Now,’ continued Mrs. Theresa, turning to Frederick, as soon as the servant had left the room, ‘now, Mr. Frederick Montague, I have a favour—such a favour to ask of you—it’s a favour which only you can grant; you have such talents, and would do the thing so admirably! and my lady Battersby would quite adore you for it. She will do me the honour to be here to spend an evening to-morrow. I’m convinced Mr. and Mrs. Montague will find themselves obliged to stay out another day; and I so long to shew you off to her ladyship; and your Doctor Carbuncle, and your Counsellor Puff, and your Miss Croker, and all your charming characters. You must let me introduce you to her ladyship to-morrow evening. Promise me.’—

‘O, Ma’am,’ said Frederick, ‘I cannot promise you any such thing, indeed. I am much obliged to you; but I cannot come, indeed.’

‘Why not, my dear Sir? Why not? You don’t think I mean you should promise, if you are certain your Papa and Mamma will be home.’

‘If they do come home, I will ask them about it,’ said Frederick, hesitating; for, though he by no means wished to accept of the invitation, he had not yet acquired the necessary power of saying no, decidedly.

‘Ask them!’ repeated Mrs. Theresa, ‘my dear Sir, at your age, must you ask your Papa and Mamma about such things?’

‘Must! no, ma’am,’ said Frederick; ‘but I said I would; I know, I need not, because my father and mother always let me judge for myself about every thing almost.’

‘And about this I am sure,’ cried Marianne; ‘Papa and Mamma, you know, just as they were going away, said, ‘If Mrs. Theresa ask you to come, do as you think best.’

‘Well then,’ said Mrs. Theresa, ‘you know it rests with yourselves, if you may do as you please.’



‘To be sure I may, Madam,’ said Frederick, colouring from that species of emotion, which is justly called false shame, and which often conquers real shame; ‘to be sure, ma’am, I may do as I please.’

‘Then I may make sure of you,’ said Mrs. Theresa, ‘for now it would be downright rudeness, to tell a lady you won’t do, as she pleases. Mr. Frederick Montague, I’m sure, is too well bred a young gentleman, to do so impolite, so ungallant a thing!’

The jargon of politeness and gallantry is frequently brought by the silly acquaintance of young people, to confuse their simple morality and clear good sense. A new and unintelligible system is presented to them, in a language foreign to their understanding, and contradictory to their feelings. They hesitate between new motives and old principles; from the fear of being thought ignorant, they become affected; and, from the dread of being thought to be children, act like fools. But all this they feel only, when they are in the company of such people, as Mrs. Theresa Tattle.

‘Ma’am,’ Frederick began, ‘I don’t mean to be rude; but I hope you’ll excuse me from coming to drink tea with you to-morrow, because my father and mother are not acquainted with lady Battersby, and may be they might not like——’

‘Take care, take care,’ said Mrs. Theresa, laughing at his perplexity, ‘you want to get off from obliging me, and you don’t know how. You had very nearly made a most shocking blunder, in putting it all upon poor lady Battersby. Now you know it’s impossible Mr. and Mrs. Montague could have in nature the slightest objection to my introducing you to my lady Battersby at my own house; for don’t you know, that, besides her ladyship’s many unexceptionable qualities, which one need not talk of, she is cousin, but once removed, to the Trotters of Lancashire, your mother’s great favourites. And there is not a person at the Wells, I’ll venture to say, could be of more advantage to your sister Sophy, in the way of partners, when she comes to go to the balls, which it’s to be supposed she will some time or other; and as you are so good a brother, that’s a thing to be looked to, you know. Besides, as to yourself, there’s nothing her

ladyship delights in so much as in a good mimic; and she'll quite adore you!

'But I don't want her to adore me, ma'am,' said Frederick, bluntly; then, correcting himself, added, 'I mean for being a mimic.'

'Why not my love? Between friends can there be any harm in shewing one's talents, you that have such talents, to shew? She'll keep your secret, I'll answer for her; and,' added she, 'you need n't be afraid of her criticism; for, between you and I, she's no great critic; so you'll come. Well, thank you, that's settled. How you have made me beg and pray; but you know your own value, I see, as your entertaining people always do. One must ask a wit, like a fine singer, so often. Well, but now for the favour I was going to ask you.'

Frederick looked surprised; for he thought, that the favour of his company was what she meant; but she explained herself farther.

'The old Quaker who lodges above, Old Ephraim Eden, my lady Battersby and I have so much diversion about him; he is the best character, the oddest creature! If you were but to see him come into the rooms with those stiff skirts, or walking with his eternal sister Birtha, and his everlasting broad-brimmed hat, one knows him a mile off. But then his voice, and way, and all together, if one could get them to the life, they'd be better than any thing on the stage; better even than any thing I've seen to-night; and I think you'd make a capital Quaker for my lady Battersby; but then the thing is, one can never get to hear the old quiz talk. Now you who have so much invention and cleverness—I have no invention myself, but could not you hit upon some way of getting to see him, so that you might get him by heart? I'm sure you, who are so quick, would only want to see and hear him, for half a minute, to be able to take him off, so as to kill one with laughing. But I have no invention.'

'O, as to the invention,' said Frederick, 'I know an admirable way of doing the thing, if that was all. But then remember, I don't say I will do the thing, for I will not. But I know a way of getting up into his room, and seeing him, without his knowing I was there.'

'O tell it me, you charming, clever creature!'

‘But remember, I do not say I will do it.’

‘Well, well, let us hear it, and you shall do as you please afterwards.’

‘Merciful goodness!’ exclaimed Mrs. Tattle, ‘do my ears deceive me? I declare I looked round, and thought the squeaking chimney-sweeper was in the room.’

‘So did I, Frederick, I declare,’ cried Marianne, laughing. ‘I never heard any thing so like his voice in my life.’

Frederick imitated the squeaking voice of this chimney-sweeper to great perfection.

‘Now,’ continued he, ‘this fellow is just my height; the old Quaker, if my face were blackened, and if I were to change clothes with the chimney-sweeper, I’ll answer for it, would never know me.’

‘O, it’s an admirable invention! I give you infinite credit for it!’ exclaimed Mrs. Theresa. ‘It shall, it must be done: I’ll ring, and have the fellow up this minute.’

‘O, no; do not ring,’ said Frederick, stopping her hand, ‘I don’t mean to do it. You know you promised that I should do as I pleased; I only told you my invention.’

‘Well, well, but only let me ring, and ask whether the chimney-sweepers are below; you shall do as you please afterwards.’

‘Christopher, shut the door; Christopher,’ said she to the servant, who came up when she rang, ‘Pray are the sweeps gone yet?’

‘No, ma’am.’

‘But have they been up to old Eden yet?’

‘O, no, ma’am; nor be not to go till the bell rings; for Miss Birtha, ma’am, was asleep, laying down, and her brother would n’t have her wakened on no account whatsoever; he came down his self to the kitchen to the sweeps though; but would n’t have, as I heard him say, his sister waked for no account. But Miss Birtha’s bell will ring, when she wakens, for the sweeps, ma’am; ’twas she wanted to see the boy as her brother saved, and I suppose sent for ’em to give ’em something charitable, ma’am.’

‘Well, never mind your suppositions,’ said Mrs. Theresa, ‘run down this very minute to the little squeaking

chimney-sweep, and send him up to me. Quick, but don't let the other bear come up with him.'

Christopher, who had curiosity as well as his mistress, when he returned with the chimney-sweeper, prolonged his own stay in the room, by sweeping the hearth, throwing down the tongs and shovel, and picking them up again.

'That will do Christopher; Christopher, that will do, I say,' Mrs. Theresa repeated in vain. She was obliged to say, 'Christopher, you may go,' before he would depart.

'Now,' said she to Frederick, 'step in here to the next room, with this candle, and you'll be equipped in an instant. Only just change clothes with the boy; only just let me see what a charming chimney-sweeper you'd make; you shall do as you please afterwards.'

'Well, I'll only change clothes with him, just to shew you for one minute.'

'But,' said Marianne to Mrs. Theresa, whilst Frederick was changing his clothes, 'I think Frederick is right about——'

'About what—love?'

'I think he is in the right not to go up, though he can do it so easily, to see that gentleman, I mean on purpose to mimic and laugh at him afterwards; I don't think that would be quite right.'

'Why, pray, Miss Marianne?'

'Why, because he is so good-natured to his sister. He would not let her be wakened.'

'Dear, it's easy to be good in such little things; and he won't have long to be good to her neither; for I don't think she'll trouble him long in this world any how.'

'What do you mean?' said Marianne.

'That she'll die, child.'

'Die! die with that beautiful colour in her cheeks! How sorry her poor, poor brother will be. But she will not die, I'm sure, for she walks about, and runs up stairs so lightly! O your must be quite, entirely mistaken, I hope.'

'If I'm mistaken, Dr. Panado Cardamum's mistaken too then, that's my comfort. He says, unless the waters work a miracle, she stands a bad chance; and she won't follow my advice, and consult the Doctor for her health.'

'He would frighten her to death, perhaps,' said Ma-

Marianne. 'I hope Frederick won't go up to disturb her.'

'Lud, child, you are turn'd simpleton all of a sudden, how can your brother disturb her more than the real chimney-sweeper?'

'But I don't think it's right,' persisted Marianne, 'and I shall tell him so.'

'Nay, Miss Marianne, I don't commend you now; young ladies should not be so forward to give opinions and advice to their elder brothers unasked; and Mr. Frederick and I, I presume, must know what's right, as well as Miss Marianne. Hush! here he is!—O the capital figure!' cried Mrs. Theresa,—'Bravo! Bravo!' cried she, as Frederick entered in the chimney-sweeper's dress: and as he spoke, saying,

'I'm afraid, please your ladyship, to dirty your ladyship's carpet.'

She broke out into immoderate raptures, calling him 'her charming chimney-sweeper!' and repeating, that she knew beforehand the character would do for him.

She instantly rung the bell in spite of all expostulation—ordered Christopher to send up the other chimney-sweeper—triumphed in observing, that Christopher did not in the least know Frederick, when he came into the room; and offered to lay any wager that the other chimney-sweeper would mistake him for his companion.—And so he did; and when Frederick spoke, the voice was so very like, that it was scarcely possible, that he should have perceived the difference.

Marianne was diverted by this scene, but she started, when in the midst of it they heard a bell ring.

'That's the lady's bell, and we must go,' said the blunt chimney-sweeper.

'Go, then, about your business, and here's a shilling for you to drink, my honest fellow. I did not know you were so much bruised, when I first saw you—I won't detain you. Go,' said she, pushing Frederick towards the door.

Marianne sprang forward to speak to him; but Mrs. Theresa kept her off; and though Frederick resisted, the lady shut the door upon him by superior force; and having locked it, there was no retreat.

Mrs. Tattle and Marianne waited impatiently for Frederick's return.

‘I hear them,’ cried Marianne, ‘I hear them coming down stairs.’

They listened again, and all was silent.

At length they heard suddenly a great noise of many steps, and many voices in confusion in the hall.

‘Merciful!’ exclaimed Mrs. Theresa, ‘it must be your father and mother come back.’

Marianne ran to unlock the room door, and Mrs. Theresa followed her into the hall.

The hall was rather dark, but under the lamp a crowd of people. All the servants in the house were gathered together.

As Mrs. Theresa approached, the crowd opened in silence, and she beheld in the midst Frederick, blood streaming from his face; his head was held by Christopher, and the chimney-sweeper was holding a bason for him.

‘Merciful! Gracious Heaven! what will become of me!’ exclaimed Mrs. Theresa. ‘Bleeding! good God! he’ll bleed to death! Can nobody think of any thing that will stop blood in a minute? A key, a large key down his back; a key—has nobody a key? Mr. and Mrs. Montague will be here before he has done bleeding. A key! cobwebs! a puff-ball! for mercy’s sake! Can nobody think of any thing that will stop blood in a minute! Gracious me! he’ll bleed to death, I believe.’

‘He’ll bleed to death! O my brother!’ cried Marianne, catching hold of the words, and terrified, she ran up stairs, crying, ‘Sophy, O Sophy!—come down this minute, or he’ll be dead! my brother’s bleeding to death. Sophy! Sophy! come down, or he’ll be dead!’

‘Let go the bason, you,’ said Christopher, pulling the bason out of the chimney-sweeper’s hand, who had all this time stood in silence, ‘you are not fit to hold the bason for a gentleman.’

‘Let him hold it,’ said Frederick, ‘he did not mean to hurt me.’

‘That’s more than he deserves. I’m certain sure he might have known well enough it was Mr. Frederick all the time, and he’d no business to go to fight—such a one as he is, with a gentleman.’

‘I did not know he was a gentleman,’ said the chimney-sweeper, ‘How could I?’

‘How could he indeed?’ said Frederick, ‘he shall hold the bason.’

‘Gracious me! I’m glad to hear him speak like himself again, at any rate,’ cried Mrs. Theresa. ‘Lord bless us! and here comes Miss Sophy too.’

‘Sophy!’ cried Frederick, ‘O, Sophy! don’t you come—don’t look at me, you’ll despise me.’

‘My brother!—where? where?’ said Sophy, looking, as she thought, at the two chimney-sweepers.

‘It’s Frederick,’ said Marianne, ‘that’s my brother.’

‘Miss Sophy, don’t be alarmed,’ Mrs. Theresa began, ‘but gracious goodness, I wish Miss Birtha——’

At this instant a female figure in white appeared upon the stairs; she passed swiftly on, whilst every one gave way before her.

‘O, Miss Birtha!’ cried Mrs. Theresa, catching hold of her gown to stop her, as she came near Frederick, ‘O, Miss Eden, your beautiful India muslin! take care of the chimney-sweeper, for heaven’s sake.’—But she pressed forwards.

‘It’s my brother; will he die?’ cried Marianne, throwing her arms around her, and looking up as if to a being of a superior order, ‘Will he bleed to death?’

‘No, my love!’ answered a sweet voice, ‘do not frighten thyself.’

‘I’ve done bleeding,’ said Frederick.

‘Dear me, Miss Marianne, if you would not make such a rout,’ cried Mrs. Tattle. ‘Miss Birtha, it’s nothing but a frolic. You see Mr. Frederick Montague only in a masquerade dress. Nothing in the world but a frolic, ma’am. You see he stops bleeding. I was frightened out of my wits at first; I thought it was his eye, but I see it is only his nose; all’s well, that ends well. Mr. Frederick, we’ll keep your counsel. Pray, ma’am, let ask no questions, it’s only a boyish frolic. Come, Mr. Frederick, this way, into my room, and I’ll give you a towel, and some clean water, and you can get rid of this masquerade dress. Make haste, for fear your father and mother should pop in upon us.’

‘Do not be afraid of thy father and mother, they are surely thy best friends,’ said a mild voice. It was the voice of an elderly gentleman, who now stood behind Frederick.

‘O, Sir! O, Mr. Eden!’ said Frederick, turning to him.——

‘Don’t betray me! for goodness’ sake, say nothing about me,’ whispered Mrs. Tattle.

‘I am not thinking about you—Let me speak,’ cried he, pushing away her hand, which stopped his mouth, ‘I shall say nothing about you, I promise you,’ said Frederick, with a look of contempt.

‘No, but for your own sake, my dear Sir, your papa and mamma! bless me! is not that Mrs. Montague’s carriage?’

‘My brother, ma’am,’ said Sophy, ‘is not afraid of my father and mother’s coming back. Let him speak—he was going to speak the truth.’

‘To be sure, Miss Sophy, I would n’t hinder him from speaking the truth; but it’s not proper, I presume, ma’am, to speak truth at all times, and in all places, and before every body, servants and all.

I only wanted, ma’am, to hinder your brother from exposing himself. A hall, I apprehend, is not a proper place for explanations.’

‘Here,’ said Mr. Eden, opening the door of his room, which was on the opposite side of the hall to Mrs. Tattle’s, ‘here is a place,’ said he to Frederick, ‘where thou mayest speak the truth at all times, and before every body.’

‘Nay, my room’s at Mr. Frederick Montague’s service, and my door’s open too. This way, pray,’ said she, pulling his arm.

But Frederick broke from her, and followed Mr. Eden.

‘O, Sir, will you forgive me!’ cried he.

‘Forgive thee!—and what have I to forgive?’

‘Forgive, brother, without asking what,’ said Birtha, smiling.

‘He shall know all,’ cried Frederick? ‘all that concerns myself, I mean. Sir, I disguised myself in this dress; I came up to your room to-night on purpose to see you, without your knowing it, that I might mimic you. ‘The chimney-sweeper, where is he?’ said Frederick, looking round, and he ran into the hall to see for him—‘May he come in? he may—he is a brave, an honest, good, grateful boy. He never guessed who I was; after we left you, we went down to the kitchen together, and



there I, fool that I was, for the pleasure of making Mr. Christopher and the servants laugh, began to mimic you. This boy said, he would not stand by and hear you laughed at;—that you had saved his life;—that I ought to be ashamed of myself;—that you had just given me half-a-crown:—and so you had;—but I went on, and told him, I'd knock him down, if he said another word.—He did, I gave the first blow—we fought—I came to the ground—the servants pulled me up again.—They found out, I don't know how, that I was not a chimney-sweeper—the rest you saw. And now can you forgive me, Sir,' said Frederick to Mr. Eden, seizing hold of his hand.

'The other hand, friend,' said the Quaker, gently withdrawing his right hand, which every body now observed was much swelled, and putting it into his bosom again—'This and welcome,' offering his other hand to Frederick, and shaking his with a smile.

'O that other hand!' said Frederick, 'that was hurt, I remember.—How ill I have behaved—extremely ill. But this is a lesson, that I shall never forget as long as I live. I hope for the future I shall behave like a gentleman.'

'And like a man—and like a good man, I am sure thou wilt,' said the good Quaker, shaking Frederick's hand affectionately, 'or I am much mistaken, friend, in that black countenance.'

'You are not mistaken,' cried Marianne, 'Frederick will never be persuaded again by any body, to do what he does not think right; and, now, brother, you may wash your black countenance.'

Just when Frederick had gotten rid of half his black countenance, a double knock was heard at the door. It was Mr. and Mrs. Montague.

'What will you do now?' whispered Mrs. Theresa to Frederick, as his father and mother came into the room.

'A chimney-sweeper! covered with blood!' exclaimed Mr. and Mrs. Montague.

'Father, I am Frederick,' said he, stepping forward towards them, as they stood in astonishment.

'Frederick! my son!'

'Yes, mother, I'm not hurt half so much as I deserve; I'll tell you——'

'Nay,' interrupted BIRTHA, 'let my brother tell the

story this time,—thou hast told it once, and told it well; no one but my brother could tell it better.’

‘A story never tells so well the second time, to be sure,’ said Mrs. Theresa, ‘but Mr. Eden will certainly make the best of it.’

Without taking any notice of Mrs. Tattle, or her apprehensive looks, Mr. Eden explained all that he knew of the affair in a few words, ‘your son,’ concluded he, ‘will quickly put off this dirty dress—the dress hath not stained the mind—that is fair and honourable. When he felt himself in the wrong, he said so; nor was he in haste to conceal his adventure from his father; this made me think well of both father and son,—I speak plainly, friend, for that is best. But what is become of the other chimney-sweep? he will want to go home,’ said Mr. Eden, turning to Mrs. Theresa.

Without making any reply, she hurried out of the room as fast as possible, and returned in a few moments with a look of extreme consternation.

‘Good Heaven! what is a catastrophe, indeed!—now indeed, Mr. Frederick, your papa and mamma have reason to be angry. A new suit of clothes!—the bare-faced villain!—gone—no part of them in my closet, or any where—the door was locked—he must have gone up the chimney, out upon the roof, and so escaped; but Christopher is after him. I protest, Mrs. Montague, you take it too quietly.—The wretch!—a new suit of clothes, blue coat and buff waistcoat.—I never heard of such a thing!—I declare, Mr. Montague, you are vastly good now, not to be in a passion,’ added Mrs. Theresa.

‘Madam,’ replied Mr. Montague, with a look of much civil contempt, ‘I think the loss of a suit of clothes, and even the disgrace, that my son has been brought to this evening, fortunate circumstances in his education. He will, I am persuaded, judge and act for himself more wisely in future; nor will he be tempted to offend against humanity, for the sake of being called, ‘The best Mimic in the world.’

HM











